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GOLDEN GRAINS

FROM

LIFE'S HARVEST FIELD.

BY

T. S. ARTHUR.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY J. W. BRADLEY.
LOWELL: L. P. CROWN & CO.
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Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by

J. W. BRADLEY,

In the Office of the Clerk of the District Court of the United States,
in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

INTRODUCTION.

The title of our book needs but a word of explanation. Golden Grains from Life's Harvest Field, what are they but good and true principles, pure affections and human sympathies, gathered by the mind as it passes through its fields of labor? These are, indeed, golden grains, full of the soul's nutrition. A handful or two have we shaken from the full ears, and now present them to our readers. May the offering bear with it strength to the weak and the tempted, comfort to those who are in affliction, and good impulses to all.

With this brief introduction, we scatter a few "golden grains," gathered on our way through life, over other hearts, believing that many of them will fall upon good ground, and yield fruit in their season.

CONTENTS

Page

The Night and the Morning, ... 7

The Mother's Dream of Heaven, . . . 26

Flowers by the Way Side, ... 32

A Merry Christmas, ... 35

To Mary in Heaven, ... 46

Sowing in Tears and Reaping in Joy, . . 49

The Mother, ... 70

Our Little Harry, ... 87

A Domestic Sketch, ... 91

All for the Best, ... 97

The Sphere of Use, ... 101

The Old Man to his Wife, ... 104

Good for Evil, ... 107

The Great Man, ... 134

Page

Fading Flowers, ... 135
Stanzas, ... 140
I Said So! 141
Our Little Son, ... 149
Bread in the Winter Night, ... 151
To a Child with a Dove, ... 162
How to be Happy, ... 163
A Thought, ... 174
A Domestic Scene, ... 175
The Departed One, ... 184
Going to Heaven, ... 188
Frank, ... 208
Autumn Thoughts, ... 211
The Poor Man, ... 219
Too Busy, ... 235

GOLDEN GRAINS.

THE NIGHT AND THE MORNING.

Every one in passing through life has times of darkness, after which there breaks a dim light upon his mind, followed by the cold gray tints of morning. But to few, very few, does the broad bright day come in its sunny brightness. There is a change from darkness to light, but the light is dim and cold, and the way is not clear before the straining sight. Soon even this poor image of day fades in the mental horizon, and all is dark again. And thus life progresses, from darkness to the feeble dawn; but to few—we repeat it—to very few does this dawn advance until lost in perfect day; nor can it thus advance to any one until he has right views of life, and then, not until these views, becoming active principles in his mind, are brought down into ultimate forms.

At twenty-one Albert Earnest stepped upon the world's broad stage as a man, confident that he would be able to act well his part, even without the aid of a prompter. He had talents, was well educated, and the profession he had chosen was law. A student in the office of an eminent counsellor, and admitted to the bar under his patronage, and with a share of his practice, Albert Earnest might well be pardoned for imagining that there was a plain way before him, and that the most complete success, accompanied by the most perfect satisfaction of mind, would be his in the end.

Our young friend was ambitious. He wished to stand high in the community, so that all eyes could be upon him.

"The world shall hear of me before I die," was a favorite thought with him; and sometimes it even fell into oral expression.

With ardor, activity, and unwearied industry, Earnest commenced his life-struggle. He did well, very well, at every step,—but his best performances fell so far short of what others—longer on the stage, and more perfect in their parts—could do, that he was dissatisfied with himself, and often unhappy. He pressed on, however, the more ardently for these depressing contrasts, and night, ere long, gave place to something resembling the morning, in which he could see the advancement he had made, and feel some small degree of self-congratulation. This light was only dim and brief. It faded as he caught sight of some towering eminence before him, upon which stood one whose talents and genius had enabled him to mount far above the great mass of his fellow-men. He did not feel, deeply moving in his soul, the power that was to lift him to that proud eminence. He felt that he possessed power, but not adequate to the attainment of such a height. He was discouraged and unhappy; but still he abated not an effort. He struggled and toiled on, even in darkness.

In the midst of these stern efforts, he was touched by a gentle sentiment. A beautiful being passed before his eyes, and filled his heart with her presence. For a time his mind was all absorbed in a new pursuit. He saw no longer the high reward of ambition, but only the reward of love. In this new pursuit he was successful, and led to the altar a young and lovely bride. For a time he believed himself to be perfectly happy. But old states came back upon him. There was something yet to be obtained before he could be happy.

Once more he turned, with renewed energy and a more determined purpose to his life-pursuit. He sought eminence as an end, by means of the legal profession. Usefulness to the community, in his profession, formed no part of that end. His own elevation was the good after which he was struggling. Of course, in this struggle the community received a benefit, perhaps nearly equal to what it would have received had his end been the good of the whole instead of the good of the individual; the difference was to himself. Of the nature of that difference he had no idea. He comprehended not the great truth, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Success crowned the efforts of Albert Earnest. He rose rapidly. At the age of thirty, he stood very high at the bar of his native state. It happened, just at that time, that a fierce struggle was going on between two great political parties. Each, in the hope of gaining ascendency in the councils of the nation, chose the most popular man that could be found, and nominated him as the party candidate for a seat in Congress. Earnest received one of these nominations, and consented to serve. He was elected; and a clearer morning, with the promise of a longer and a brighter day than he had yet known, opened upon him. At Washington, during the first session he attended, Earnest did himself great credit. Letter writers lauded his efforts for the party from one end of the country to the other, and created an interest every where in the brilliant young Congressman.

As might be supposed, Earnest, who looked mainly to the attainment of a distinguished name, felt much elated by his success. All was bright around him; and his sun was far below its zenith.

During his second year, clouds began to show themselves along the horizon of Earnest's sky. His over-zealous devotion to party, instead of to the general interests of his country, not only made him a point of attack from the opposition, but exposed him to charges and allegations that, when publicly brought, fretted and fevered his mind to a high degree. Thus far, he had only been pressing the downy pillow of political life—now he was beginning to feel the thorns that were concealed beneath. Instead of going right on in the plain path of duty, regarding, as a truly wise man ever does, the good of the whole in the faithful performance of all the obligations of his office or station, Earnest turned now to the right, and now to the left, to parry a thrust here, or return a blow there. Thus he soon stood out in full view, as one engaged in a mere war of personalities, instead of a public servant, earnestly striving to promote the general good. Severely was he now paying the penalty of the mistake he had committed, in endeavoring to rise into eminence by means of a party nomination to office—even though the office were a high one. With other and better views he might have taken the same office, and filled it with honor to himself and benefit to the nation; but the selfish end of mere distinction blinded his judgment, and led him into the commission of errors that caused the firm ground he had imagined himself standing upon to shake beneath his feet.

In the strong passionate whirl of excitement in which Earnest lived, every gentler domestic sentiment, was, for a time, extinguished. His beautiful, loving-hearted wife, whose devotion to her husband was as tender and deep as ever burned in a woman's breast, felt, sadly felt, that he had changed towards her. His letters were few and brief, and contained little more than words. It was plain that he wrote home as a duty, and not because he wished to send his heart there, that his wife might read the love which was inscribed upon it.

To feel that he was cold towards her, painful as it was, grieved not Mrs. Earnest half so much as did the slanders that were heaped upon his good name. There was a cause for this coldness in the new and exciting interests with which a public station had filled his mind. It was only upon the surface, her own heart assured her; at the centre all was yet warm with a true affection. Still, this external coldness, added, as it was, to most acute pangs, occasioned by one dishonorable charge after another, that was made against her husband by a venial party press, and by hired concoctors and venders of political detraction at Washington, caused the cheek of Mrs. Earnest to grow to pale.

During his brief visits at home, Earnest could not help noticing that his wife did not look so well. But his mind was too full of something else to more than remark upon it.

At length a stormy session of Congress, in which the two great parties struggled long and fiercely for the ascendency, came to a close, and Earnest returned home to resume the duties of his profession, feeling that he had won but few laurels, although he had received many severe wounds. Poorly, indeed, was he satisfied with the result. The morning that opened with such a beautiful promise of a bright and glorious day, had too soon grown dim with gathering clouds, and ere the sun had reached the glowing zenith, thick darkness enshrouded his sky, and a fierce tempest was breaking upon his head. He was unhappy—more unhappy than he had ever felt, for his disappointment was the greatest he had yet known. Instead of gaining eminence he had gained detraction. Instead of displaying great ability, he had displayed great weakness, and had spent more time in petty personal and narrow party contentions, than in carrying out any schemes of usefulness to his country. All this he now saw and felt, and he was deeply mortified at the error he had committed—an error almost irretrievable.

A few months of quiet at home permitted the better feelings of his nature again to come forth, and the heat that still glowed at the centre of his heart to extend to and warm the surface. He felt that there was a blessing in home, and something elevating and purifying in the very atmosphere that surrounded his innocent-minded wife, whose virtues had never before appeared to shine so brightly.

They were sitting together one day, talking of their two children, a girl and a boy, and looking into the future with hope for these beloved ones. Earnest felt a new impulse, and the inspiration of a higher end. He had glimpses of a new truth; he saw that there were a better purpose and a higher reward than in distinction for its own sake. Still, there was mingled with this the weakness of a fond desire that his boy might become a distinguished man. But this hour of pleasant, healthy communion of thought and feeling, was not to pass without the tempter's presence. A servant came to the door, and announced a committee of gentlemen in the parlor, who had particular business with Mr. Earnest.

This committee proved to be some old political friends, who had come to announce to Earnest that he had been again nominated as a candidate to run for Congress, and to know if he would accept the nomination. His first impulse was to decline the honor which had been conferred upon him. But a whisper of ambition caused him to hesitate, reflect, and then agree to run again as a party candidate, under the assurance that his election would be certain.

"Who were they, dear?' asked Mrs. Earnest, when her husband rejoined her. There was doubt in her face, and clearly expressed anxiety in the tones of her voice.

"I have been again nominated for Congress," was replied.

"But you will not accept the nomination?" His wife spoke with eagerness.

"I could not decline, Flora," he answered.

"Then you have agreed to run again?"

"I have."

Mrs. Earnest did not reply, but her countenance fell, and there came over it an expression that was painful to look upon.

No further allusion was made to the subject; but Earnest never forgot the strange look that settled upon his wife's face when he declared his intention of again becoming a candidate for a seat in the national legislature.

The canvass that ensued was characterized by a bitter, criminating, and accusing spirit. Strong efforts were made to destroy public confidence in the two candidates by allegations against their personal characters. An upright, honest man, in whose whole life there was not a passage he could wish to hide, Earnest felt keenly these base attempts to do him injury. For two months he was in a state of feverish excitement; and his mind was so filled with the hope of a successful issue to the contest in which he was engaged, that he saw not how deeply his wife was suffering, nor how rapidly her health was failing. The primary cause of this failure in Mrs. Earnest's health was far more radical than the distress occasioned by seeing her husband lost in the mad excitement of a political canvass, and hearing him shamelessly traduced, when she knew him to be a man of unflinching integrity. But, even though there was a primary cause, there was also a secondary and exciting cause, and this was in the disturbance of mind to which we have just referred.

Upon a re-election to Congress Earnest set his heart. During his first term he had committed many serious mistakes and had exhibited many weak points. But let him get once more within the legislative halls of his country; let him again have a chance to be heard; and he felt that he could build up for himself a name and a fame that would make the past forgotten. So earnest was he to secure his re-election, that he stepped below the dignity of manhood, and stooped to use his personal influence in order to secure the favor of voters.

At last the trial day came; the votes were cast and counted, and Earnest suffered a defeat. It was night with him again, and it soon became darker and more profound; for, within a month after his defeat, his oldest child, a boy, sickened and died—that boy, for whom he had so oftened looked into the future with hope and pride. Yes, it was night again with him, gloomy night; and made gloomier far by the reflection which would cross his mind, that, although in the prime of manhood, in the zenith of his intellectual strength, he had signally failed in the attainment of his dearest hopes in life. He had gained some eminence, it is true, but he stood far, very far below the position to which he had aspired.

The death of this child fell with a heavier blow upon his wife than Earnest imagined. He saw her tears, pale face, and bowed head, but he did not see how feebly the vital forces moved in the centre of her physical frame; nor was he aware of the fact, that weak as her spirit felt, it did not and could not cling to him fully for support, for though its tendrils reached out searchingly in all directions, they found only here and there a point of attachment. No, he was not aware of this; for he did not know, as he should have known, the loving heart that beat in her inner bosom. Not but that he was ever gentle and kind towards her; not that he did not love her; not that he treated her with cold neglect. The cause lay deeper. As his second self, she yearned intensely to enter into and sympathize with him fully in his highest aspirations. But mere ambition—the selfish love of making for himself a great name—ruled in the upper regions of his mind, and with this she had no fellow-feeling. She had simpler, but truer and nobler views of life; and so her spirit could not unite itself fully with that of her husband—could not blend with his until the two became as one spirit.

One truth Earnest learned in this season of darkness and affliction, and it was of use to him afterwards; he learned that, in forgetfulness of self and in the quiescence of selfish ends, there was a strong sustaining power and deep peace for the troubled spirit.

New excitement followed this calm state. As the current of his thoughts and feelings began to flow on again in the old channels, the old ambition for political elevation stirred within his heart once more. There was something like disgrace attached to his defeat at the late election; at least he felt that there was, and so did some of his friends. To cover this, a foreign mission was suggested. At this Earnest caught eagerly; and from that time until the appointment was made, which took place in the course of a few months, he could think or dream of little else.

Much to the surprise, and no little to the disappointment of Earnest, his wife begged the privilege of remaining at home with her parents during the time her husband stayed abroad. Her health had become feeble and her spirits had lost the buoyant tone of former years. Earnest strongly urged her to accompany him; to which she replied in a sad voice—

"If you insist upon my going, Albert, I will go; but I shall be far happier here."

"Happier away from your husband?" said, he with a significance that made her heart bound with a wild throb.

"I will go, Albert," she replied instantly. "Pardon me if, in the selfishness of my feelings, I forgot a wife's duty."

Earnest felt that, little as he had said, he had said too much; but his effort to unsay it had no effect. His wife had taken, on the instant, her resolution, and steadfastly adhered to it. When he set sail for the foreign country in which he was to represent his government, she went with him. There was something in this self-devotion of Mrs. Earnest that caused her husband to think of her more, and to regard her with a tenderer interest than he had yet done. She could not conceal from him, though it was plain that she tried hard to do so, the fact that her heart was ever turning towards the beloved ones in her old home, and longing to be with them. As the wife of a foreign minister, she filled the position in which circumstances had placed her with becoming dignity. All who came into association with her, respected, honored, and loved her. The beautiful consistency of his wife's conduct, and the high estimation in which she was held, were, to Earnest, a matter of no little pride. She had never appeared to him so lovely, so wise, so truly good before. He saw her in a new light, that revealed new points of beauty; and in loving her more tenderly and truly he ceased to bend with such intense idolatry before the shrine of self-aggrandizement. She was winning him away from ambition.

After they had been abroad for a little over a year, the approach of an event, looked for with trembling interest by Mrs. Earnest, caused her to turn her eyes towards home.

"Albert," she said one evening as they sat alone, she with her head reclining against him, "Albert, dear," and she spoke with a slight faltering of the voice, "I don't want to leave you, but I cannot tell how eager I feel to go home, that my mother may be with me. She has always been with me, you know."

"It is a long voyage for you to take alone, Flora," her husband remarked.

"But I will take it cheerfully, Albert."

"If I could only leave my duties here and return with you."

"But you cannot. If I go, I must therefore go alone."

"What will be done with Agnes?"

"I must take her with me."

"And leave me all alone?"

"I know it is hard, dear husband!" Mrs. Earnest said, laying her arm across his bosom, and looking with dimmed eyes into his face. "But Agnes will be much better with me. Don't you think she will?"

"Yes, I suppose it will be best. But if you go, you will have to start immediately."

"Yes; I must leave you within a week.

And at the expiration of a week, Mrs. Earnest left P—— for the United States, accompanied by her little daughter and a servant.

Earnest felt strangely after he had parted from his wife. He thought of her with a feeling of tenderness unknown before; accompanied by a presentiment that they would never meet again. A shadow came over his spirit, that grew darker every day. He felt that night was again approaching, and his heart shrank from the gathering shadows in dread of a deeper darkness than he had yet known. Of little account in his eyes seemed now the reward of ambition, and poor the honors for which he had striven. Scarcely a week elapsed after parting with his wife, before the thought of resigning his post as foreign minister, and following her home, there to sink into private life and enjoy its inestimable blessings, passed through his mind. The thought once formed lingered for a time, and then fixed itself, and was ever present to him. Nearly two months must elapse before he could hear of his wife's arrival at home. It was a long, long time to be in doubt and suspense. Before the expiration of this period, the question of resigning his place, or holding on for a time, was seriously debated; but there was no decision of the matter until a letter came from Flora, announcing her safe arrival in the United States. It was a long, tender, appealing letter, and urged him to come home, with such arguments and entreaties as, in his then state of mind, could not be resisted. A part was in these words.

"If you are ambitious to serve your country—if your country's good is your end in seeking political elevation, then I will say—serve your country in any office you may be called to fill. But is this so, Albert? Have you not rather sought distinction, and the poor reward to be found in the honor that men pay to those who stand above their fellows? Look closely at your own motives, my dear husband! and see what are the ruling ends that govern you. Do they spring from a love of doing good to others, or of gaining something for yourself? If the latter, you are doomed to a perpetual darkening of your fondest hopes; if the former, to perpetual and ever brightening sunshine.

"We may never meet again, dear Albert! I feel as if I should not recover from my approaching illness. If such should indeed be the case, oh! think of this, my earnest appeal to you: remember it as the last tender injunction of one who, living, loved you, and dying prayed for your happiness."

The scales fell from the eyes of Albert Earnest. He saw where he stood, and comprehended the great error in life that he had committed, though not so clearly as he did a few years afterwards.

Ten days from the receipt of this letter, Earnest was on his way to the United States. Two weeks was all the time it took the swift rushing steamboat to cross the broad Atlantic; but to Earnest they seemed like so many months. On arriving in New York, he learned the fatal truth that Flora had died just two weeks before, shortly after giving birth to a son.

The unhappy man was stricken to the earth. For many days he remained in New York, not even announcing his arrival in the country to his friends; but of that they soon became aware, through other sources, and surprised at his neither writing nor coming home, some of them went to seek him. He was found in a listless, dark, and gloomy state of mind. The blow had completely stunned him. To meet with those who had been with his wife in her last illness, and who could repeat the many loving remembrances that she had left for him, when life was beating low, stirred his heart again within him, and gave him, even in this, the darkness of his blackest night, the hope of a coming day.

His return to the shrine of his early love, the fires of which were now extinguished, was, indeed, a sad pilgrimage. And when he knelt at that shrine, his very soul was bowed to the earth.

But he had duties in life to perform; and he lifted himself up to perform them, strong as was the effort it required to do so.

Almost the first thing that met his eyes at home was a portrait of his wife, that had been painted after her return from Europe. He started with a sudden thrill when his eyes rested upon it—it was so wonderfully life-like. As he gazed long and mournfully into the sweet face that looked upon him with almost living affection, he could not help murmuring with Cowper,

> "Oh! that those lips had language!"

In the presence of this image of the loved and lost one, his children were brought to him. Agnes! the dear Agnes, so like her mother! And the babe, whose coming had been in tears. As he held these sweet pledges of love in his arms, and looked into the pictured representation of their mother's face, he felt that her spirit was present with them.

From that hour Earnest had new purposes clearly formed in his mind. He was cured of ambition. And from that hour the morning again began to break.

Five years have elapsed since that period of deepest gloom, five years of unselfish devotion to the duties of his profession. Without thinking about, or seeking for distinction, he has gained more honor for the well-directed efforts of a vigorous mind, than he ever gained before. It is broad bright day with him now, and the light, instead of declining, seems ever advancing towards noon; and if he does not again make mere self-aggrandizement the ruling end of his life, it will so continue to increase, even to the mellow autumn of a peaceful old age.

THE

MOTHER'S DREAM OF HEAVEN.

Three beautiful children made glad the home of a happy mother. Her love for them was intense, and her care never failing. They were in her thoughts all the day long and in her dreams by night. The youngest of these children was a boy. He had large, deep blue eyes, and his long lashes, when he slept, lay upon his cheeks like the lashes of a woman. Something in his face ever awakened in the minds of those who gazed upon him, thoughts of heaven, and many said of him that he was but a stranger here and would soon return to his own country. And such thoughts came, sometimes, to the happy mother, and then her heart trembled and grew faint.

At last, what had been feared, befell the child. The Angel of death came and removed him from his earthly abode to his heavenly dwelling-place, and the stricken mother bowed her head and would not listen to the voice of consolation.

"God is good," were the words of one who sought to comfort her, "and he afflicts us in loving kindness."

"I will not believe it," replied the weeping mother. "It was not good to take from me my precious boy."

"He is with the angels,—think of that. The great problem of his life is solved, and it is well with him. There is neither doubt, nor fear, nor anxiety on his account, for he is safe in the everlasting habitations of our Father in heaven.

The mother listened, and the consoler went on.

"No more grief, no more sorrow, no more pain! Think of that. Let not your thoughts droop with feeble wings about the dark and gloomy grave. He is not there. But, let them rise on swift and sunny pinions to the beautiful dwelling-place of the angels. His decaying body alone fills the grave; but his pure spirit, that gave life and beauty to its earthly tenement, has gone to his better home. Would you have him back again? Had you the power, with a word, to call him to earth, would you speak that word, now that he has escaped the long trial and suffering that comes to all who have to make the journey of life? No, I am sure you would not."

The tears of the mother ceased to flow, and she bent nearer to him who spoke and listened more intently. He went on.

"All children who die, are raised up in heaven and received by angels, who love them with the utmost tenderness. Your dear boy, though he has been taken from an earthly mother, has already found a heavenly one. And you have not really lost him, for he is present in your thoughts, and you love him with even an intenser affection than before. To part with him is hard; for our natural feelings cling to those we love, and their removal brings exquisite pain. But our natural feelings have in them the taint of selfishness, and it is needful that they should be elevated and purified; or, rather, that they should die in order that spiritual affections may be born. And what are spiritual affections? The love of things good and true for their own sake? And such affections are not born unless natural affections are laid in the grave. The death of these affections is always accompanied by pain; but the birth of corresponding spiritual affections will be with joy. The deep sorrow you now feel is a natural sorrow. Your heart is aching for its loss; and, even while reason and religion tell you that this removal from earth to heaven is one of infinite blessedness to your boy, you mourn his loss and will not be comforted. But, it is for you to look up and feel an exquisite joy in the thought that you have added one to the company of God's angels. It may not be now; it cannot be now; for the smiting of your natural affections is too recent, and the waters of affliction must flow for a time. And, it is good that they should flow forth, in order that spiritual consolation may flow into your heart from heaven. But, this influx of healing waters will depend on yourself. You must be willing to look up and to seek comfort from the only source whence it springs. You must be spiritually glad that your child has gone to heaven—that is, glad for his sake, and for those who are made happier in heaven by his presence. There is such a gladness—but it thrills in a region of the mind far above the place where natural affections move—and it is full of that interior delight which fills the hearts of angels."

Thus spoke the comforter, and his words found their way into the mother's heart. She did not make a response, but her thoughts were filled with new images; and, even in the bitterness of her sorrow, she tried to look away from her own loss and to think of all that her absent one had gained.

In the night following, as she lay slumbering on her pillow which was wet with tears, a sweet dream, that was not all a dream, came to her. She saw before her a company of angels, surrounded by infants and little children—the latter dressed in white garments, with flowers blushing amid their clustering curls. They were in a garden, and the children were sporting with one another, and, ever as they drew near or touched the flowers that were springing around them, each blossom glowed with a new and living beauty. Eagerly the mother looked for her precious boy, for she knew that he was in this company, and, as she looked intently, one of the angels, who held a child by the hand, separated herself from the rest, and approached her. She knew her sweet one in an instant; and, oh! inexpressible delight! she knew the angel also. It was her own mother! Her mother who had been taken to heaven when she was only a child, but whose gentle, loving face, had ever remained pictured on her memory.

Oh! the exquisite joy of that moment. Her own mother was now the angel-mother of her beautiful boy. How sweet the smile that beamed upon her from eyes seen only in dreams for years! And, as her lost darling sprung into her arms and laid his head upon her bosom, a voice of exquisite melody, whose tones had come to her as if from a far off, many and many a time, since childhood, said—

"Daughter, be comforted! He was too pure, too gentle, too frail for earth. Life would have been a scene of pain and suffering; He would have been sorely tried and tempted of evil, and, perchance, might have fallen by the way. Therefore, in mercy he was removed to this heavenly land where there is no evil to tempt, no pain to afflict, no grief to bow the stricken heart. Sorrow not for him, for all is well. He has been committed to my care, and I will love him with a tenderness made deeper for the love that is felt for you. A little while longer, and you will be called home. I will keep your darling safe for you until that time."

An angel's kiss then warmed the mother's cheek and she awoke. Heavenly light and heavenly music were in her chamber. Slowly the light faded, and the music grew fainter and more distant; not outwardly but inwardly distant; and, as she hearkened after it, bending her spirit towards heaven, she still heard the sounds; and, even yet she can hear them, when earthly grief is hushed and her mind is elevated into heavenly tranquillity.

From that time, joy mingled with the mother's sorrow. She believed the dream. To her it was not fantastic, but a vision of things that were. She had treasure above, and her heart was there also. Love's golden chain had extended its links and the last one was fastened in heaven. Daily, hourly, momently, she missed the one who was away, and she longed to hear again the sound of his happy voice, and to look upon his beautiful face; but, she knew where he was, and that it was well with him; and she dried her eyes and patiently bore her affliction.

FLOWERS BY THE WAYSIDE.

Stop, Edward, and let me pick this sweet flower," said a young lady to her brother. They had come along a winding path, through the woods, and were crossing a meadow in which grew many sweet and fragrant blossoms. As the sister spoke, she let go her hold upon her brother's arm, and ran a little way from the path to gather the wild flower whose beauty had pleased her eye.

"Kate, Kate," called Edward, with some impatience, "why will you stop in this way?" Don't you see how near to sunset it is growing! We shall be late home."

"It will only take a moment," replied Kate, as she plucked the flower. "Oh! I must have this one also!" she added, going a few steps farther, and adding another flower to the small bunch she held in her hand.

"How beautiful!" said the sister, as, with a glowing cheek, she resumed her place by her brother's side.

"Yes, they are pretty enough," replied Edward; "but it takes too much time to gather them. We are late now."

"Oh, no; not very late. Suppose the sun is down. There is beauty and fragrance in the early twilight, and a holy calm that is sweet to the spirit. Oh, I must add that flower, also, to my boquet!"

And springing away, Kate ran a dozen steps from the path to secure the object of her desire.

"We shall not be home to night, Kate," said Edward, "if you go on in this way."

"Oh, yes we will; and in good time, too," returned Kate, as she came back; "and I shall have a bunch of wild flowers into the bargain, which will be so much gained."

It was all to no purpose that Edward chided his sister. She could not pass a beautiful flower without stepping aside to gain it.

The sun was still above the hill-tops when they arrived at home. Edward sat down in the porch to await the summons to tea, and Kate went for a vase in which to arrange her flowers.

"Are they not lovely?" said the pure-minded girl, holding before her brother, as he still sat enjoying the cool air of evening, her bunch of flowers.

"They are, indeed!" And the young man took them in his hands, admired their beauty and enjoyed their fragrance.

"We were home in time," said Kate, smiling.

"Yes."

"And have these sweet flowers. We lost nothing by stopping to pluck them, and gained hours of enjoyment in so doing.

"You're a philosopher, sister," returned the young man, smiling also. "I only hope your philosophy may go with you through life."

"And why not? Life is as a journey through woods and fields. Along the path grow many flowers of affection. If we stop to pluck them, their fragrance and beauty will refresh us on the way, and gladden our senses on reaching the end of our journey. We shall all get home at last. Better, in doing so, to have our hands filled with the flowers that grow by the wayside.

"You are right, sister," was the thoughtful reply. "In our eagerness to get to the end of our journey, we too often neglect the beauty and fragrance that present themselves at every step. I will not soon forget your flowers by the wayside."

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

"I DON'T think it at all worth while," said Mrs. Lamberton. "It's a great waste of money, and, besides, does them no real good."

"Very true," remarked Mr. Lamberton; "thousands of dollars are spent at Christmas for one trumpery thing and another that might be far more usefully employed. I never liked the system. It does children, as you say, no good."

"How much did we spend on last Christmas for drums, horses and dogs, and the dear knows what all?"

"Oh, don't ask me! More than I'd like to count up. And it was all a sheer waste. If the money had been given to the poor, there would have been some satisfaction in thinking about it. But now there is none."

"Well, I'm not in favor of spending a single cent for toys and such like things."

"Give them all a sixpence a-piece, and they'll be happy enough," said the father, "and then we'll have no crying over broken dolls' heads, crippled wagons, or legless horses."

"Harry will be dreadfully disappointed, I'm afraid," remarked the mother, already half relenting. "He has done little else all day but talk about what Kriss Kringle will put in his stocking to-night. And Anna will cry her eyes out if she doesn't get a new doll."

Uncle Joseph and Aunt Rachael were silent auditors of this little conversation. Just then the lights were brought into the room, and Anna, Harry and Charley came bounding in with them, as wild and playful as young fawns. They had been looking forward to Christmas for I can't tell how long, and now that it was only one day off, they could hardly contain themselves. Their young imaginations teemed with images of things in store for them by the good Kriss Kringle, in regard to whose identity, there was a division among the younger members of the house. Anna, who was eight years old, and, therefore, entitled by her age to have her opinions considered of weight, positively declared that her father was Kriss Kringle; but Harry, three years her junior, as positively asserted that the aforesaid Kriss came down the chimney, and was, therefore, a very different personage from her father, who was too big to get in at the top or out at the bottom. As for little curly-headed, rosy-cheeked Charley, as mischievous a rogue as ever lived to love sugar plums, he didn't trouble his head at all about the matter. His whole theory on the subject lay in his confident expectation of finding his stockings filled with toys and candies on Christmas morning. Beyond that he had no questions to ask nor doubts for solution.

"Oh, papa! To-morrow's Christmas!" cried Charley, climbing upon his father's knee. To-morrow's Christmas! And wont Kriss Kringle bring me the nice things! I want a horse, and a sword, and a wheelbarrow—and a whole heap of sugar plums."

"I'm afraid Kriss won't come this year," returned Mr. Lamberton, wishing to take the edge off of Charley's disappointment.

"Oh! yes he will!" spoke up Anna and Harry, quickly. "And he'll bring me," said the latter, "a gun and a sword—and then won't I fight the Mexicans! Bang! boom! bang!"

"And he'll bring me the dearest wax doll!" said Anna, "with curly hair, and eyes that open and shut just as if it were alive. Oh! won't it be nice!"

"Don't be too certain, Anna," said the father, Kriss Kringle don't come every year."

"Oh, yes he does! yes he does!" answered two or three little voices at once. "He came last Christmas, and the Christmas before," added Anna, "and he'll be here this year—I know he will."

"But suppose he shouldn't come?" suggested Mr. Lamberton, and he looked very grave.

There was something so serious in their father's voice, that the children felt that his words really meant more than they had at first believed—and their faces became sober also. Just then the tea bell rang, and all thoughts of toys and dolls were, for the moment, dissipated. After supper, the children were washed and dressed in their night clothes. Each hung a stocking in the chimney corner, ready for the advent of the good genius who loves children, and then yielded to the oft-repeated solicitation of Margaret the nurse, to come along and go to bed.

"I must say my prayers, first," lisped dear little Charley, running up to his mother, and kneeling down before her.

"Our Father," said the mother, in a low, serious voice.

"Won't Kriss fill my stockings full, mother?"

"But you are saying your prayers, now. You mustn't think of toys, Charley. Our Father."

"Our Father," came musically from the sweet lips of the child.

"Who art in heaven."

"Oh! I hope he'll bring me a whole pile of wagons and dogs and horses!" And Charley clapped his hands with delight.

"Hush, dear! You mustn't think about toys now. Who art in heaven."

"Our Father, who art in Heaven," softly murmured the child.

"Hallowed be Thy—"

"Won't good old Krissy come, mother?"

"Charley must say his prayers good, if he wants the dear angels to stay with him while he is asleep. Come, love! Now don't think any more about toys and sugar plums. Hallowed be Thy name."

But it was no use. Charley could not say his prayers. His head was too full of Christmas. Harry met with but little better success—and Anna, after she had been in bed five minutes, remembered her neglect on this score, and, kneeling under the clothes, piously lifted her thoughts to Heaven.

Ere this scene closed, Mr. Lamberton had half repented his resolution—and the mother of these three dear little ones felt her heart almost too weak to carry out her purpose.

"I declare," said the former, "I'm afraid it will be felt as too serious a disappointment."

"And so am I," returned the latter.

"It is such a useless waste of money."

"I know it is."

"Besides, it does children no real good. In fact, as far as my observation goes, it does them harm."

In this Mrs. Lamberton agreed.

"Then," said the husband, "will it not be a mere weakness on our part, if we follow the old custom this year, and not a true regard for our children?"

"I suppose so."

"Will we be acting right then?"

"Perhaps not. But it will be such a disappointment."

"No doubt of that. But a light one compared to what they will have to suffer in after life. The fact is, a trial like this will help to prepare them for the severer ones to come in the future."

Thus arguing the question, Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton finally came back to their original determination, which was to dispense with the usual "nonsense" of toys, that would be broken or thrown aside in an hour, and heal the wounded hearts occasioned thereby, with a generous distribution of a few sixpences and shillings. This would be a saving; and I am afraid the economy of the new order of things, was, in reality, its highest recommendation. Bed-time at last came, and Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton retired for the night, leaving the expectant stockings hanging empty in the chimney-corner. The mother, just before lying down, had occasion to go into the room adjoining. It was the one in which Kriss Kringle was expected to make his appearance some time during the night. There was Charley's little stocking, round, almost as when his foot was in it, and bent to the very shape. Mrs.

Lamberton sighed gently, as the image of his hopeful face, turned up to hers, presented itself; and she heard, in imagination, his sweet voice as it mingled his evening prayer with words that showed his thoughts to be near the earth.

Hours went by after the mother's head rested upon its pillow, before sleep came. And then she dreamed that it was Christmas morning, and that the children's stockings were filled, and that they were wild with delight. Charley was on her knee, showing his wagons, and dogs, and horses. Harry was marching about the room with his sword and drum, and Anna was hugging in her arms a wax-doll with almost as much delight as a young mother ever felt in clasping to her bosom her new-born babe. A noise, which seemed to come from overhead, where Uncle Joseph and Aunt Rachel slept, awoke Mrs. Lamberton from this dream. She started up and listened, but all was silent.

The mother slept again. But this time her dreams were less pleasant. Christmas morning had come; but it brought no joy to the expectant children. Their stockings were empty and their hearts well nigh broken. Sleep passed once more from her eyelids, and, though it was long before the approach of dawn, the gentle visitant came not again to her pillow.

And long ere the morning broke, Mr. Lamberton found himself awake and thinking of the children.

"They will be so disappointed," sighed the mother, when she found that her husband's slumber was likewise broken.

"Is there nothing that we can put into their stockings?" asked the father, thus indicating the state of his mind.

"I've been thinking of that; but there isn't a thing in the house that would do. I'm sorry we hadn't bought them something," replied the mother.

"We can do so still. I will go out directly after breakfast and buy them lots of things," said Mr. Lamberton.

"The mischief will all be done long enough before breakfast. The disappointment of their eager hopes—the scattering of their delightful dreams—will almost break their hearts. Dear little Charley! He couldn't say his prayers last night for thinking of his well-filled stockings. Ah me!—We have done wrong—I feel it."

"Suppose I put a half dollar in each of their stockings?" said Mr. Lamberton.

"You can do so if you like; but it won't satisfy them."

Undetermined what to do, or rather seeing no mode whatever of remedying their error, Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton lay awaiting the approach of day, yet dreading to see the dark curtain that was close about the Eastern horizon begin to lift itself up. But at length morning broke, and a dim, pale light began to steal in at the window, showing first one object and then another, until all parts of the room became clearly visible. In expectation of trouble with the disappointed children, Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton left their bed and commenced dressing themselves hurriedly in order to be prepared to meet and offer the little comfort that it was in their power to give. Soon there was a sound in the room above where the children all slept with the nurse. Their pattering feet were next heard upon the stairs; anon the door of the adjoining room was burst open. All was then still for a few moments. Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton listened with oppressed feelings. There was a low exclamation from one of the children that sounded like a sob. Following this was a sudden burst of joy and loud wild shouts of,

"Kriss has come! Kriss has come! Oh! Mother! Mother! Father! Kriss has come!"

Mr. Lamberton sprung to the door and threw it quickly open. His surprise and delight were scarcely less than that felt by the children. Sure enough! Kriss Kringle was there, sitting close within the fireplace, well loaded with toys, his pipe in his mouth, and his merry face turned towards the shouting children. The father and mother paused in wonder.

Daylight came in, still but faintly through the half-closed shutters and gave to the figure of Kriss the very air and expresssion of life. Some moments passed before they could really convince themselves that it was not a breathing figure, but one cunningly wrought by the hand of man, which was before them. Soon the children, at first disposed to look on from a distance, began gradually to approach. Harry laid violent hands upon a wagon, and Anna seized upon a beautiful wax doll; Charley, last to overcome his doubts as to whether Kriss were really alive or not, came up cautiously, and while his eyes were fixed upon the laughing face of the figure, he withdrew from its hand a stocking crowded to overflowing with toys.

The good Genius had forgotten no one in the house. There was a beautiful scarf stowed away in his pocket for father, and a handsome card-case for mother. Uncle Joseph and Aunt Rachel, too, were remembered. Even Betty and Margaret had something, and there was no end to the toys and sugar-plums contained in pack and pockets for the children.

But, the mystery was as to who had prepared this delightful surprise, coming as it did opportunely, and correcting in such a good-natured way the error of Mr. and Mrs. Lamberton? It was Uncle Joseph and Aunt Rachel, of course, who had been up nearly all night in order to have every thing ready; though they never clearly owned to the fact.

That was indeed a merry Christmas for all; and Mr. Lamberton was as much pleased with his handsome scarf, as was any child in the house with his or her present from Kriss Kringle. As to the trouble taken in advance on account of broken dolls' heads, wagon-wheels, and all that, none appeared through the day, and when night came, and the tired little ones went off willingly to bed, they slept with their treasures around them.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

WRITTEN FOR FRIENDS IN AFFLICTION.

Thou hast passed the shadowy portal;
Thou hast borne the mortal strife;
Thou hast left this world of sorrow
For a world of heavenly life;
And our hearts are grieving for thee,
Grieving with intensest pain,
Grieving that we shall not see thee—
Our sweet daughter!—here again.

Blinding tears are 'neath our eyelids;
Every lash contains a tear;
And our hearts are wet with weeping—
Weeping for thee, Mary dear!
Weeping for thy loss, sweet angel!
Ah! thou'rt with the angels now,
And their hands have smoothed the furrows
Pain drew sternly on thy brow.

How they love thee! Ah! *we* loved thee—
Loved thee more than words can tell,

Loved thee, not, we trust, unwisely;
Lost one! not, we trust, too well.
Lost one? No, not lost, for near us,
In the spirit, still thou art,
And in all our best affections
Bearest still a precious part.

Lost? Oh no! But safe in Heaven,
Where, by childhood's shorter way,
God in tender mercy took thee—
Took thee with himself to stay.
Took thee—but He did not bear thee
Far from us—no, thou art near,
And thy voice comes, in sweet music,
Stealing softly on the ear.

When the morning breaks, we see thee;
Slowly as the day goes by,
Hour by hour, till fall the shadows,
Every moment though art nigh.
In the dimness of the twilight,
Clearer still thy form appears;
Thou art with us through the darkness—
All our pillows wet with tears.

Wasted almost to a shadow,
Sad and pale from recent pain,
Wert thou, when our Father took thee,
Ne'er to feel one pang again;

And thy sad, pale face, in changing,
  Slowly changing in our eyes—
Glimpses of thy former features,
  Even now before us rise.

As it was, ere sickness touch'd thee,
  Soon thy gentle face we'll see,
In its mild and thoughtful beauty,
  And its pure tranquillity.
Calmer, then, will be our feelings;
  Better thoughts our minds will fill,
And, with hearts bow'd down, yet patient,
  We will own our Father's will.

SOWING IN TEARS AND REAPING IN JOY.

EMILY WELDON was happy. She had been wooed and won. The wedding-day was appointed, and, in the pleasant excitement of preparation for that joyous time, the hours passed sweetly away.

The young man, whose willing bride Emily soon expected to become, was engaged in mercantile pursuits. His store was near that of Mr. Weldon, the father of Emily, with whom he was in regular business intercourse.

One day, it was within too weeks of the time at which the marriage was to take place, Mr. Weldon came home, looking very grave. This was noticed both by his wife and daughter, although no remark was made thereon by either of them. The cause they supposed to lie in some matter of business that gave him more than usual concern.

On that evening, when Mr. Weldon was alone with his wife, he said, in a very serious tone,

"I heard something about Henry Miller this morning, that I do not like.

"Indeed! What is it?"

"I am afraid he does not possess honest principles."

"Why do you think so?"

"I will tell you. Week before last he went to New York, and attended a sale of French Silks. He purchased largely, and had the goods forwarded before he left the city. They were received here some ten days ago, and have since been sold by him in the original packages, which, he stated to the purchaser, had never been opened. The sale was made from the pattern cards, and at a small advance on the prices paid. The last purchaser, on examining the goods, found nearly every package more or less damaged. Of the fact of this damage, Mr. Miller denies all previous knowledge; but I have evidence of a character not to be disputed, which satisfies me that he did know of this damage, and, knowing, it sold the goods as sound, thus actually defrauding the purchaser. A man who will do this is a rogue at heart, and not fit to become the husband of Emily."

"This is a grave matter," said Mrs. Weldon, looking very serious. "But will not Henry take back the goods, or make some abatement in the price?"

"He will do neither, the purchaser informs me. He alleges that it was a fair sale, and cannot be cancelled."

"Will the person who bought from him lose much in the transaction.

"At least a thousand dollars."

"That is bad, very bad! But perhaps what Henry says is true. It may be that he did not know any thing of the defect in the goods."

"Unfortunately for him," replied Mr. Weldon, "there are at least three merchants in my neighborhood, of whose veracity there can be no question, who positively say that several of these packages of goods were seen by them, open, in Henry's store, on the day they were received from New York, and that they saw him looking over them. That is one fact, and a pretty strong one—for it comes in a positive shape. The presumptive evidence is equally strong. At least six days elapsed from the time these goods were received until they were sold; and it is hardly to be presumed that they were suffered to lie in his store all that time without examination. And again, they were purchased with a special view to his country sales, for he so informed me on his return from New York; stating at the time that he had bought them low, and expected to obtain quite handsome returns from them. The small advance he received on the whole lot was not worth considering as a set-off to what he would have made if the goods had been sound, and he had sold them by the piece to his country and city customers. The more I look at it and think about it, the less am I satisfied. I am afraid he has acted with dishonesty. If I can be fully assured of this, he can never have the hand of Emily with my approval, for I will at once withdraw the consent I gave to the marriage.

"Be well persuaded in your own mind that the charge is a true one, Mr. Weldon, before you take this decided step, for there is no telling what may be the consequences," said the wife much disturbed in her mind.

"What stronger proof do I need that Henry is not honest at heart," replied Mr. Weldon, "even admitting his own version of the matter, than the fact that he sold the damaged goods, and refuses to take them back. Admit that he sold them under a belief that they were in a sound condition—does this alter the case? Not at all, in my mind. He represented them as good, and the purchaser, believing his representation, paid him the price of sound goods and received a damaged article, upon which he must loose heavily. Upon every principle of mercantile honesty, he is bound to take them back, and cannot refuse to do so without dishonor. This is my doctrine."

"Suppose you talk to him. Perhaps you could persuade him to act differently."

"Oh, no! I shall not say a word. I shall use no influence. Mere persuasions, if yielded to, would not change the principles from which he acts. They would remain the same, and would show themselves at another fitting opportunity. Let him act out, in freedom from all interference from me, his real character; and then we can see its true quality. It is of the most vital consequence to our daughter that this become fully apparent."

On the next day, other and stronger evidence reached Mr. Weldon, and he no longer had the smallest doubt remaining upon his mind as to the question, whether Miller did or did not know that the goods he sold were in a damaged condition. It was clear that he did know this, and deliberately took a dishonest advantage in trade.

It now became the mother's duty to break this unhappy news to her daughter, and dash from her lips the brim full cup of joy she was about lifting with an eager hand; and she sought the very earliest opportunity to do so.

Emily was sitting alone in her room, singing to herself a pleasant air, while her hands were busied in preparations for the coming event to which she looked forward with so much happiness. The entrance of her mother caused her to look up. The sweet murmur of her voice became instantly still. There was something in the expression of her mother's face so unusual that it caused her heart to beat with quicker and stronger throbs.

"Emily," said Mrs. Weldon, coming at once to the point, for the subject was of too grave and weighty a character to admit of any gradual approaches—"I have sad news for you. But it is better that you hear it now."

The face of the maiden grew pale, and her lips quivered. She tried to ask what the sad news was, but could not utter a syllable.

"Your father has discovered something in the conduct of Henry that displeases him very much. And it is something that should excite as strongly your displeasure."

Emily tried in vain to ask what her lover had done. But her tongue was paralyzed.

"Your father calls what he has done, dishonest!" resumed Mrs. Weldon.

Instantly the face of Emily became flushed.

"He charges him falsely then!" she said, with strongly expressed indignation.

"Your father would be the last man to bring a false accusation against any one," replied the mother seriously.

"I know! I know! But he is mistaken!" replied the daughter, quickly, leaning forward against her mother, and burying her face on her bosom. Her frame quivered, and tears gushed from her eyes.

After the violence of the first outburst of mental anguish had subsided, and while the face of her daughter was still hidden upon her bosom, Mrs. Weldon said:

"To you, Emily, this is a thing of vital importance; and, because it is so, I bring it at once to your mind. Try and feel calm about it. Let your reason act freely, in order that you may weigh dispassionately all the evidence that will be brought to your mind. If we have been mistaken in our estimation of Mr. Miller's character, it is much better that we should know it now."

Emily made no answer. After pausing a few moments, to collect her thoughts, the mother in as coherent and connected a manner as possible, related to her daughter all that she had learned about the sale of the damaged goods. After she had concluded, Emily arose from her reclining position. She looked very pale and sad; but was perfectly calm.

"I shall believe nothing against Henry, mother," said she, "until I hear what he has to say about this matter. It is but right that he should be heard in his own defence. That he will make all clear, and show himself to be a man of honor and integrity, I have not the least doubt."

"But which he would not be, if the charge made against him were a true one."

"No certainly not," replied Emily, firmly.

"Keep yourself calm, and your mind evenly balanced, my daughter," said Mrs. Weldon, encouragingly. "A circumstance more nearly affecting your peace for life, has never before occurred. Move forward not a single step until you are sure of the ground upon which your are treading. Above all things, do not suffer yourself to think for a moment, that either your father or myself are less anxious about the innocency of Henry Miller than you are. Evidence that will satisfy your mind ought to satisfy ours; and evidence that will satisfy our minds ought to satisfy yours."

Some hours after this brief interview had closed, Henry Miller, while writing at his desk, received a note from Emily. Its contents were, in substance, as follows:

"I have been surprised and deeply grieved to hear allegations touching your character as a merchant, which I lose not a moment in bringing to your notice. It is said that you recently purchased a lot of silk goods in New York, which on examination, you found to be damaged, and that you resold these damaged goods, as a fair article, to a person who will lose heavily by the transaction. I have denied this charge on the spot, and I want you to furnish me with indubitable proofs of its falsehood. Let me see you, by all means, this evening."

This note caused Henry Miller to fell deeply disturbed. The charge against him was true. He had examined several packages of the goods purchased at the sale in New York, and for which he had paid cash, and found them all more or less injured. Without proceeding a step further in the examination, he closed up the few packages opened, determining, as he did so, that he would work them off upon somebody, and thus save himself a serious loss. About the morality of the act he did not stop to inquire. He had, some where, imbibed the doctrine that all was fair in trade; and, in most of his transactions, he was governed by that doctrine. He was, therefore, known as being pretty shrewd at a bargain. These damaged silks were sold pretty much in the way that has been stated; and Miller was quite self-complacent at the lucky escape from loss that he had made. When the purchaser discovered the damage, he stoutly denied knowing any thing about it, and persisted in this to the last, while he resolutely refused to have the bargain cancelled.

The reception of Emily's note disturbed this guilty self-complacency, and startled him almost as much as the tumbling of his house over his head would have done. There was a tone about the note, too, that he did not like; for, while it declared that the writer had denied the facts, it was clear that her own mind was in some doubt. He very naturally concluded, that her information in regard to the transaction alluded to must have come to her from her father, who was a man of great probity, and had that reputation in business circles; and who would not be likely to mention the subject unless the evidences of what was alleged were pretty conclusive to his own mind. The more he thought about the matter, the more uneasy he felt. It was clear that she to whom he was engaged in marriage held in deep aversion the principles from which he had acted and, if she were satisfied that he had really acted from them, would refuse to become his wife. He loved her sincerely, and his heart took instant alarm, lest in gaining an advantage in trade, he had lost a jewel of priceless value.

Thinking and feeling thus, his mind became more and more disturbed. Most heartily did he wish that he had met the loss himself, instead of shifting it off upon a neighbor. The strong censure upon what he had done, that was implied in the note of Emily, set him to thinking seriously about the morality of the act. Less under the influence of a strong desire to make money, than usual, he could now see that what he had done was unjust, if not dishonest; and his cheek burned with shame, as the thought flashed over his mind, that it might be possible to hide the truth from Emily.

In no very pleasant frame of mind the young man called that evening upon his intended bride.

He found her a good deal agitated, and very serious. As for himself, he was so ill at ease that he carried a confession of his guilt in his face.

"Could you believe me guilty of such an act as that to which you referred in your note of to-day?" he asked, as soon as he met her.

"No, I could not," she promptly replied. "But my father says that he has evidence which he cannot doubt, going to prove that you must have known the quality of the goods before you sold them. To me this is a very serious matter, Henry, and, therefore, you must forgive my plainness of speech. It is best for us to understand each other clearly now. The fact of your knowing the goods to be damaged before you sold them I cannot believe. No one will make me believe it. I care not how strong the proofs may be, I will not credit them. But tell me, were the goods you sold really damaged?"

"Unfortunately they proved to be so, and I was very sorry for it when I heard it."

"You sold them for sound goods?"

"Yes."

"And they proved to be damaged?"

"Unfortunately so."

"Then you of course received them back again?"

The blood instantly rose to the neck, face, and forehead of the young man, and he stammered out an incoherent reply, while Emily Weldon sat looking steadily and calmly into his face. How sad her heart grew, and how low its pulses beat, we need not say, at these evidences of her lover's want of correct principles. By his own confession he had sold for good a damaged article, and when the damage was reported, it was plain that he had refused to annul the bargain. For a few moments there was a deep, oppressive, and troubled silence, then Emily said,—

"Henry, am I to understand that you really refused to perform this act of justice?"

"I have not yet received back the goods," he replied, "but I will do so to-morrow."

"Do, in the name of all that is just, Henry!" said Emily, with fervor. "How could you have hesitated about this for a single instant! There is no earthly gain that can compensate for the smallest violation of what is just between man and man. The purchase was made from you in good faith, and your ignorance of the quality of the article is no reason why you should not receive it back."

Henry Miller felt completely subdued before the single-minded girl, whose every word and tone condemned him. He had regarded his own interests so intently, that in seeking them he had injured those of his neighbor, and of this he stood convicted before one, who, of all others in the world, he desired should think him governed in every act by the highest and best of motives.

The young man's own explanation of his conduct by no means satisfied the mind of Emily. A veil had been taken from before her eyes, and she saw more deeply into his character. It was clear that he lacked principle—in fact an honest principle. The more Emily thought about this, the more did she feel troubled. Her father was a man of the strictest integrity. In all his dealings he was rigidly just. From him she had inherited a love of justice, as well as been taught, from her earliest childhood, to respect in every thing the rights of others. The unexpected discovery that her lover had been guilty of a most palpable infringement of another's rights, caused, as she continued to reflect upon it, a most severe conflict in her mind, between the love she bore the young man, and her abhorrence of what he had done. For several days this continued, during which time Henry Miller called twice to see her, but she declined meeting him. At the end of a week she wrote to him a long letter. A part of it ran thus:

"It was not for your person that I loved you, but for the manly virtues I believed you to possess. I have been taught from my infancy up to regard justice in all things, and to seek to benefit others rather than to injure them in the pursuit of selfish ends. I fondly believed you to possess the same principles I had been taught to respect, as well as to love them as they were daily embodied before me in the life of my father; and, in consenting to become your wife, I did so gladly, because I believed that, in a union with you, my own character would not only be elevated and purified, but that, in this union, I should be supremely happy. But alas! alas! how have I been disappointed! How have I been stricken in heart to find that you held but lightly the good of others, and, to secure your own good, hesitated not to commit a great wrong. True, you have repaired that wrong, but you did so, evidently, because I condemned the act, and not because you felt it to be evil, and condemned it as such.

"Henry, how truly and tenderly I have loved you I will not say; nor will I so open to you my heart that you can become conscious of all I suffer in taking the step you have compelled me to take. To become your wife when I cannot respect nor approve your principles, would be to make us both miserable—would be a wrong to both; and, therefore, I cannot now consent to have the marriage contract between us solemnized, but ask of you that it may be annulled."

The effect of this letter upon Henry Miller was very severe. His love for the beautiful and virtuous maiden was deep and true; and he had looked forward to the union that was soon expected to take place between them with a heart full of joy. Suddenly the cup he was about placing to his lips was dashed to his feet and broken. He was not angry, but deeply grieved. He was not incensed at the maiden, but felt a profound respect for her character. His own conduct now appeared to him in its truly odious light. Restitution had been made, but he felt that there was no merit in this, for it had been rather compulsory than otherwise. Emily had said truly that it was because she had condemned the act, not because he had felt that it was evil. But the position in which his conduct placed him, now caused him to reflect, and abstract reflection brought to his mind a perception of right and wrong in a clearer light than he had ever before perceived it. He saw that the doctrine upon which he had acted—"All is fair in trade"—was a false and selfish doctrine, and sincerely did he repent of many an act of overreaching of which he had been guilty, and firmly resolve, that let come what might, he would, in all that he did in the future, strictly regard justice between man and man.

Of this change in his views and intentions, Emily knew nothing, because he felt that he could not communicate them, for they would not be received as coming from his heart, but, rather, as extorted by the force of circumstances, and urged as a reason why she should recall her request to have their marriage contract annulled. He did not return an answer to her letter for nearly a week. Then he wrote, in brief, as follows—

"There is but one thing left for me to do in this unhappy affair, and that is, to release you from your engagement. In doing so, permit me to say, that I feel no resentment towards you for the course you have taken. The sincere love I have borne you, and the respect I have had for your virtues, still remain. I cannot force them from my heart, nor will I try to do so. May you be happy. Farewell!"

The character of this reply, so different from what Emily had expected, touched her deeply. To her, it appeared subdued and sad, and she felt that there was an earnest in it of a change that might lead to the regeneration of his character.

Bitter were the heart experiences that were endured by Emily from this time forth for many years. She had, indeed, sown in tears. In acting right she had done violence to her feelings, and had entailed upon her heart the keenest sufferings. People wondered why the marriage had not been consummated; and strange stories were circulated; but neither Emily nor her parents gave any reasons, though frequent inquiries were made. It is not to be supposed that the former could conceal from the eyes of others the fact that the trial through which she had passed had proved to be one of great pain. The effect was too visible to all eyes. The lightness of her spirit was gone; the music of her happy laugh was no more heard among her pleasant companions. Even at home, she joined the family circle less frequently, and, when she did do so, the quietness of her manner contrasted sadly with its previous hilarity.

From the time Henry Miller received the severe lesson to which we have referred, he became a changed man. Reflection enabled him to see that to overreach in dealing was dishonest, and that to take from another in trade, without rendering a full equivalent for his goods, was, in plain terms, stealing. Arraigned before his own conscience, he stood self-convicted of dishonesty and theft. Shame brought repentance, and repentance a fixed determination to be rigidly just in all his dealings. And from that time forth he kept his good resolution. The image of Emily Weldon still remained present with him, but his love for her had in it but little hope. He met her in company a few times, and noticed that she was very much changed. This made him feel sad.

Years went by, and changes and reverses came. Mr. Weldon died, and left his widow and only daughter in poor circumstances. The latter had received two or three offers of marriage, but declined them all. In the mean time, the fortunes of Miller had steadily improved. Frequently, before his death, had Emily heard her father allude to him, as being as far as could be judged, most upright in all his dealings, and as bearing that reputation among business men. Emily was always gratified when such allusions were made; why, she did not ask herself.

A few months after the death of Mr. Weldon, and just as Emily and her mother were beginning to feel that want was nearer to their door than they had ever thought to find that unwelcome guest, the former received the following unexpected letter:—

"My Dear Miss Weldon.—Years have elapsed since an unhappy circumstance occurred to destroy both your peace and mine. The course you then felt it your duty to take, I have never condemned, although it has cost me much pain of mind. But you were governed by high principles that you could not violate. The effect of your conduct was to cause me to look more narrowly into my motives than I had ever before done, and to examine the principles upon which I acted by the standard that I saw you had set up. The standard was high, but I was forced to acknowledge it as the true one.

From that day, I have fixed my eyes upon, and endeavored to reach it. I will not say that I have always been successful; I will not say that I have not been sorely tempted to act from selfishness, in a way to injure my neighbor; but I will say, freely, that if in any case I have been betrayed into wrong, I have afterwards made restitution.

"So much for the principles from which I am endeavoring to act. And now, let me say, that I have never ceased to regard you with the same tenderness that I felt when no cloud intervened to obscure the sun of our happiness. I think, from a clearer appreciation of the pureness and unselfishness, as well as the integrity of your character, which I now have, that I love you with a higher and better affection than I did then. All this I now lay open to you, and again offer you my heart, which is I trust, more worthy of you than it was when you once before accepted its love. Answer this letter as early as you can, and say whether I may now claim your hand; or, if there be still a barrier, say what it is, frankly. Perhaps it can be removed. Yours, as ever,

"HENRY MILLER."

After a day's reflection, Emily thus replied:

"DEAR HENRY.—Your letter, altogether unexpected, has filled my heart with joy. What I did five years ago, was done from a stern sense of duty, and it has caused me many a heart ache. But I have never repented the step, and now less than ever, since it has been the means of causing you to see that you were then governed by wrong principles, and what is better, has led you earnestly and successfully to enter into the combat with what was false and evil. That you have overcome, fills me with such gladness that my eyes run over with tears. After all, my love has not been misplaced —my love, that even the past could not extinguish. You ask if there now be any barrier to our union? I know of none, except the altered circumstances of our family. If you take me now, you take a portionless bride. Yours,

"EMILY."

A few weeks elapsed, and then two hearts that had passed through years of suffering, were made happy; but they were happier far for this suffering, for it had been the means of making them worthy of each other. Had it not been for the severe lesson Henry Miller received, it is not probable that he would ever have reformed the leading purpose of his life, and might have been led on under the inspiration of the dishonest principles by which he was governed, into some bolder act of overreaching, that would have brought him to the bar of justice. With such a man as her husband, could Emily Weldon have been happy? No—that would have been impossible. But now, she was the wife of a man who was all she could desire her husband to be. She had indeed sowed in tears, but was reaping in joy.

Thus it is that right actions, no matter how much suffering they may cause in the present, ever bring their reward; while the smallest deviation from principle, is surely visited, at some time in life, by evil consequences. This may seem a trite adage to some, and be lightly thought of by others; but its truth is indubitable; and its importance to every one is of such serious moment, that it cannot be too often repeated, nor too often made the subject of familiar illustration.

THE MOTHER.

"COME, dear," said Mrs. Burton to a bright looking child about three years old, who was amusing himself with his playthings,—"it is your bed-time."

The happy voice of the little fellow changed to a fretful tone.

"I don't want to go to bed, mother," said he.

"O yes! It is Charley's bed-time, now. Come, dear: here is your night-gown."

"No—no—I don't want to go bed." The child spoke impatiently.

"Not want to go into your nice, warm crib?"

"No, I don't!"

Charley's sweet little face had now lost its lovely expression. His rosy lips were pouted out, his white brows contracted, and his eyes fixed and stern in childish rebellion.

"No, I don't!" he repeated.

"But it's Charley's bed-time," urged the mother, in so calm a voice, that the father, whose impatient spirit had been reproduced in his child, could hardly refrain from a strong word of reproof to his wife for not at once enforcing obedience.

"I don't want to go to bed!"

The lips of Mr. Burton parted, and he was about to utter a stern command to the child; but he restrained himself with an effort, and rising from his chair commenced pacing the floor. Mrs. Burton knew very well what was passing in the mind of her husband, for she understood his impatient temper. He never could bear the least opposition or reluctance from his children. Implicit obedience, on the instant, he laid down as the only law by which children could be rightly governed, and yet few were more impatient than he of all restraint upon his freedom of action, or more unwilling to do either right or wrong on the instant, if any immediate change in the state of his feelings were required.

"Charley!" said Mrs. Burton in so cheerful and pleasant a tone, that the child's feelings instantly changed, and he answered quite as cheerfully, while the whole expression of his face altered—

"What, dear mother?"

"Don't you want to hear a pretty little story about a lamb, that went away from its mother and got lost in the woods?"

"Oh, yes! Tell me about the lamb," eagerly returned the child, running up to his mother and climbing into her lap.

As soon as Mrs. Burton had Charley in her arms, she said.

"I'll tell you the story up stairs," and she immediately rose with him and left the room.

"He'd have no story about a lamb from me," muttered the father when alone. "I'd let him know that when I spoke to him he had to mind. The child will be ruined, if he is permitted to have his own way."

It was nearly five minute before Mr. Burton could so far compose himself as to resume the perusal of his newspaper received by the evening mail.

Meantime the mother had retired to the chamber above, with her little rebellious subject in her arms, who repeated at least half a dozen times before she was ready to begin the story—

"Tell me about the dear little lamb, mother."

Mrs. Burton repeated in a low, impressive, yet tender voice, Mrs. Barbauld's story of the lamb that wandered from the sheep-fold, and came near being destroyed by wolves; and while she was doing so, she was removing the listener's clothes, and putting on his night-gown, while all feeling of reluctance, or thought of resistance, was far from his mind. After she had finished both story and preparation for bed, the child looked up into her face and said—

"Ain't I a little lamb, mother? Ain't I your lamb?"

"Yes, you are my innocent little lamb. I hope you will never wander away, upon the cold, dark mountain where the wolves are."

"Oh, no. I'll always stay with you, mother."

"But the wolves will come even here, darling, if you don't take care."

"Here?" The child looked frightened.

"Yes, love. They were here to-night."

Charley still looked in his mother's face with wondering eyes.

"You are not a lamb like the little creatures out in the fields that you saw yesterday, all covered with warm soft wool. But inside of you there is something just like the innocent lambs, and when you are naughty, and don't mind father and mother, but say, 'I won't,' and feel and look very angry then the wolves come and eat up the dear lambs, in your heart."

All this the child but dimly understood, but he believed that it was all so, because his mother had told him. His sweet young face grew serious, and he said—

"I won't let the wolves come in any more."

"No, love, never let them come again," said the mother, as she drew his head close down upon her bosom.

"Let me say my prayers now," spoke up the child, in a moment after, and he dropped down beside his mother, and with his dimpled hands clasped together, lisped "Our Father." &c.

"Sing, 'Hush my Babe,' won't you mother?" he asked as she laid him in his crib.

Mrs. Burton bent over her innocent child, and sung, in a low voice, the beautiful cradle hymn which has lulled into sweet slumber millions of Christian children. She had reached only to the conclusion of the second verse, when Charley was asleep. The mother looked down upon him with a smiling lip and a moistening eye, for the space of a minute, and then, after tucking the clothes snugly around him, gave him a gentle kiss, and withdrew from the chamber, the very atmosphere of which seemed breathed by angels.

On the next evening, it happened that the mother was away at tea time, a very unusual thing, and Mr. Burton and his little pet—for, when Charley did not exhibit any naughty temper, his father felt the most tender love for him, and always called him his "pet"—were alone at the table. The novelty of the thing pleased the child much. He did not want to be taken down even after his father had arisen.

"Let Hannah take Charley down," said the father, kindly.

"Oh—no—Hannah shan't take Charley down!" returned the child, pouting out his lips, and shaking himself impatiently.

"Yes, yes, Hannah must take him down."

Mr. Burton now spoke positively.

"No—no"—opposed the little fellow.

"Charley, if you don't get down from the table, Hannah must take you right away to bed."

But Charley was immovable.

"Hannah take him up to bed!" said the father sternly.

His nurse lifted the child, now screaming and struggling from his chair, and carried him quickly from the room. From the chamber above, his cries came ringing down into the ears of the father, causing him to feel excited and impatient, as well as indignant, at this rebellion against his authority. Still the screams were continued, until Mr. Burton's indignation arose into a firm resolution to stop them by a mode of argumentation altogether different from what the mother ordinarily employed on similar occasions. Throwing down the newspaper that he had been trying to read, the father arose and went up stairs with a quick, firm step. He found Charley struggling vigorously with his nurse, his face red with passion. Taking him from her arm, he shook him severely, and then, with angry words, administered half a dozen severe blows. This was effectual. The frightened child hushed its screams on the instant, and turned upon his father a look of blended fear and pain that haunted him for weeks afterwards.

When about an hour subsequent to this, Mr. Burton returned to the chamber, in order to make some slight alteration in his dress, preparatory to going for his wife, who was spending the evening from home, the first sound that fell upon his ear, was a sigh, or, more properly speaking, a sob from the crib where lay the sleeping child. He went up close to the little bed, with the light in his hand, thinking that Charley was still awake. But no—he was sound asleep; but the usual sweet, innocent, happy expression, was not upon his face. His lips were compressed, grievingly, and there were two or three lines upon his forehead. Mr. Burton looked at him, until another sob struggled up from his bosom, and then he turned away with a feeling about his heart that was by no means comfortable.

When he met his wife, she inquired, with a smile, how he and Charley had got along in her absence.

"Oh, very well," he replied. But there was something in his manner that did not agree with his lips in saying "very well." On their way home, she asked again about Charley, and then Mr. Burton told her of what had occurred, and did it with the fullest justification of what he had done. The mother made no objection, but she sighed, and did not converse any longer in a free, cheerful way. On arriving at home, they went up into the chamber where the child slept. As they opened the door, Mr. Burton heard the same deep sigh, or sob, that had before fallen reprovingly upon his ear. He did not go near the child's bed, but the mother went to the crib and stood long gazing into the still troubled face of the young sleeper. When he sighed, she sighed in response, but without remarking that she did so.

Mrs. Burton said nothing in objection to her husband's mode of quieting the rebellious Charley, but she resolved never again to leave to his peculiar discipline, at the close of a long day, a weary, fretful, and impatient child. And she kept her resolution.

As Charles Burton grew older, notwithstanding his mother's most earnest efforts to keep all evil passions, wrong tempers, and perverse tendencies quiescent, by bringing whatever was opposite to them into activity in his mind; and his father's more rigid and imperious system of enforcing obedience on all occasions, and at any cost, the manifestation of his natural character was such as to give both of his parents much anxiety and pain. He was self-willed, impatient of control, and even rebelled against punishment, whether mild or severe.

At the age of eleven years, Charles met with the saddest misfortune that could have befallen him, in the death of his gentle, forbearing, long-suffering mother. For a time, her loving spirit seemed ever present with the father, when he thought of Charles, and this softened his imperious temper, and made him treat the lad's faults with more than his usual forbearance. But, after awhile, his natural state of mind returned, and his son felt his iron hand upon him. The effect was evil, and not good. Charles hid his faults for fear of punishment, and indulged them in spite of the terrors of the rod, which he knew would inevitably follow detection.

The boy's repeated acts of disobedience and wrong, soured the father's temper towards him. He rarely saw him without administering a rebuke, and never spoke kindly to him, nor sought, as his mother had done, to win him from his perverse ways by love. Often, after having been driven from his father's presence with angry words, or, perhaps, punished with blows for some glaring act of disobedience, Charles would lie awake for hours, thinking of his mother until his heart would become softened, and he would weep bitterly. He generally felt better after this, and would sink into a peaceful sleep, in which a dream, perhaps, of her whose image had presented itself and called up old and better feelings, would make bright the darkness in which his soul was enshrouded.

As the boy grew older, and all his natural tempers gained strength, he openly rebelled against his father's coercive system of government, and, at his sixteenth year, went away, not only from his house, but from the city, determined to be free from all restraints. He was pursued and brought back; but he went off again, at the first opportunity, this time taking from his father about a hundred dollars in money.

Mr. Burton was deeply distressed, as well he might be. He could gain no information of Charles for at least four months, when he heard of him as being in Cincinnati, and acting in the capacity of bar-tender, in a low drinking-house. He immediately proceeded to the West, and with the assistance of an officer, took possession of him and brought him back. The arrest, in a public place, of Charles, by direction of his father, imbittered the lad's feelings still more against him. To threats of sending him to the House of Refuge, he opposed merely a sullen silence. He made no promises of future good conduct; showed no sign of penitence, refused to go to school, or to enter into any employment, and at the first chance escaped again, and left the city. For months his father sought to find him, but in vain; and, finally, the search was abandoned as hopeless. A long time passed before the father and son again met.

One day, about four years from the period at which the lad took his final leave of home, a young man, dressed but indifferently well, landed at Louisville from a boat just arrived from New Orleans, and took lodgings at a second-class hotel. Though young, he looked as if he had met with some rough usage in the world, and had also indulged himself in sensual pleasures to excess. Nor were the marks of evil passions less distinct in his face than these.

He remained at the hotel where he had stopped for two days, going out but little, when he was joined by a man much older than himself, who came in the next boat that arrived from below. The two men held long conferences with each other, at nights, but never appeared together in the day time; and, if they happened to meet, passed without the slightest sign of recognition. But this appearance of being strangers did not deceive the hotel keeper. He had seen one of them before, and had his own reasons for believing that they understood each other very well, and had met in Louisville for the purpose of executing some well concocted scheme of villany. In this he was confirmed, on learning from a servant that he had seen one of them several times, late at night, passing from the room of the other. As soon as this kind of evidence came to his knowledge, he communicated with the police, who soon had the two men under close, but unsuspected observation.

On the evening of the third day after the arrival of the last of the two men, they met about nine o'clock in the room of the first one alluded to. The door was carefully locked, and the following conversation took place in a low whisper:

"You are sure no one sleeps in the store?"

"Quite sure. I got it out of that talkative lad yesterday; and, to-day, in reply to some remark I appeared incidentally to make, he confirmed it."

"Very well. All so far, so good. I've never yet killed any one, and would rather avoid doing so, if possible. I'm glad the coast is clear. But how shall we make our entrance? The lamp opposite gives too much light to think of trying the shutters or door, and the rear windows are at least ten feet from the ground, and overlooked by the back buildings of the —— House, from which there would be great danger of observation from some of the retiring boarders."

"I've got all that straight enough," was replied to this." "A lucky thought struck me this morning. The store adjoining is vacant, you know; I called upon the owners to-day and got the keys under pretence of wishing to rent it. These I took to a certain individual I happen to know and had others made; I have tried them and they will open the door. The true keys I have returned, promising to see the parties owning the store on Monday.

The false keys were here produced, and the speaker added:

"With these we can enter the vacant store to-night, and cut our way through the wall without risk of detection."

"Capital!"

"Nothing could be better. Before three o'clock to-morrow morning we will be dashing away through Indiana with some ten thousand dollars' worth of jewellery apiece, to the tune of 'Catch me if you can?'"

The companions in evil laughed silently at the assurance of success this arrangement seemed to guarantee.

After a conference of over an hour, in which all the minutiæ of the proceeding about to be undertaken were carefully discussed and settled, even to the extent of resistance to be made in case of surprise, the two men parted, with the understanding that they were to approach the store to be robbed from two different points, and to meet there precisely at twelve o'clock.

The younger of the two men, when left alone sat for nearly half an hour by the table at which this conference had been held, with his forehead resting upon his hand. Then rising slowly, as if his mind were too much disturbed to allow him to remain seated, he straightened himself up, muttering in an under tone as he did so—

"Charles Burton! has it come to this?"

The young man stood, with folded arms, for some five minutes, his eyes resting upon the floor. Then he sank into the chair from which he had arisen, and again rested his head upon his hand. Better thoughts were struggling for entrance into his mind, and better feelings for possession of his heart. There was a strong conflict between good and evil; the first conflict of the kind that had occurred for a year, and the most vigorous for many years. All the plans for this, his first great sin against the laws of his country and the rights and property of his neighbors, had been well digested and the course of action settled, and now there occurred a brief space between the fully arranged intention and the act; and in this pause reflection came. He tried hard to thrust these intruding and unwelcome thoughts from his mind; but the more he tried to obliterate or cast them away the more vividly did they present themselves.

It was past eleven o'clock, and all was still throughout the house. Most of the boarders had gone to bed, and the loungers in the bar-room below had, one after another, retired. The very silence seemed to give these better thoughts a power over the young man's mind, and make it more difficult for him to thrust them out. Just as this conflict was at its height, and the unhappy object of it was fighting with all his strength against the inflowing good impulses, the faint cry of a child was heard coming through the silence from a distant part of the house. Involuntarily he hesitated—it was continued—but soon there arose a sweet voice that drowned the child's unquiet murmur—

"Hush, my babe! lie still and slumber;
Holy angels guard thy bed,
Heavenly blessings without number,
Gently falling on thy head."

Back, back through years of sin and suffering did the mind of Charles Burton return with electric speed. He was a child again, and he heard only his mother's voice singing to him these old words in the old familiar air. He was kneeling by her side—he was lying on her bosom—he saw her bending over him as he lay in his little bed—he felt her kiss upon his cheek—her hand upon his brow.

From this dream of innocence and love he slowly awoke to the stern and cruel reality of the present, and the strong man was bowed and he wept like a child. A thought of the evil he was about to commit flitted across his mind, and caused him to shudder; he turned from it with a feeling of horror. He could not get away from the impression that his mother was near him and looking into his heart that was so full of evil influences.

Not long did the repentant young man remain in the room where he had so lately agreed with an accomplice to do a deed of crime. With a small bundle in his hand he stole quietly from the house, half an hour before the time at which he was to be at the jewellery store, and walked hastily to the water, where he unfastened a small boat and pushed off into the river. With his utmost strength he pulled across and landed just above the falls. A mile from Jeffersonville, in a dense piece of wood, for which he made direct, he found two horses tied. Mounting one of them, he picked his way through the forest and was soon upon the main road, and on his way to Indianapolis. Here he remained for a few days, undetermined what to do, or which way to proceed. On the second day the newspapers brought intelligence of an attempted robbery of a store in Louisville, with the apprehension of the robber in the act of cutting through the wall from an adjoining vacant building. The account stated that the police had been watching the movement of the fellow, who was an old offender, for some days, and that he had an accomplice, who, from some cause or other, deserted him at the last moment.

When young Burton read this he could not but tremble at the narrow escape he had made, nor help blessing that memory of his mother which had come to him and saved him just as he was about committing a deed that would have wrought his hopeless ruin.

Six years from the day his son left home for the last time, Mr. Burton received a letter from him dated Galena. It was the first intelligence that had come to him since that unhappy separation. Its contents were brief, but satisfactory to the present well-doing of the writer. Duty, not affection, had evidently prompted the epistle. In writing it, the son had felt too deeply the evil and suffering into which he had fallen on account of his father's harsh treatment, to be able to write with any thing more than a cold and explicit formality. There was one expression in the letter which gave the father both pleasure and pain. It was this:

"My mother's memory saved me, when I was on the brink of ruin."

Mr. Burton answered this letter with a warmth and tenderness that softened the young man's heart towards him. A year afterwards they met. A veil was thrown over the past, and neither hand has since withdrawn it.

OUR LITTLE HARRY.

Our sweet wee brother Harry,
Say, have you seen him yet?
He has a pair of bright blue eyes,
The darling little pet!
And lips as soft, and rosy red,
As flower-buds in the spring,
And voice as sweet as voice of bird
On upward bounding wing.

Say have you seen the dear sweet boy,
With his wavy flaxen hair,
And eyes as full of innocence
As eyes of angels are?
He was twelve months old, last Monday,
But still he does not walk,
And only says a word or two,
Though hard he tries to talk.

But I'm sure he'll walk right early, now,
For he stands up by a chair,
And steps out bravely, if Mamma
To take his hand is there;

And I'm sure he'll talk, too, very soon,
For he knows, now, all we say,
And calls Papa, so very plain,
When Papa is away.

He's a very cunning little rogue—
Last evening, while at tea,
Nurse brought him in, and sat him down
In a high chair, close by me.
He laughed, and crowed, and clapped his hands,
And tried, just like the rest,
To eat his bread and drink his tea—
And tried his very best.

But his tea went on the table cloth,
And his saucer on the floor,
And his spoon glanced past dear Papa's head,
And struck against the door,
And his little hands flew up and down
Like the swift wings of a bird,
And he laughed and crowed in such a way
As you have never heard.

I laughed till I could eat no more,
And little Will was wild,
To see the merry mischief shown
By such a tiny child.
Nurse took him out right quickly,
And I guess we'll take good care,

How Mr. Harry we invite
  Again our meals to share.

But he is not always such a rogue,
  He is not always wild,
But looks and acts, sometimes, as if
  He were an angel-child.
Oh! I wish that you could see him,
  On the morning of each day,
When Papa reads the Bible,
  And then kneels down to pray,—

As Mamma gets upon her knees,
  And we kneel round her chair,
Our dear pet-one drops softly down
  To join with us in prayer.
He cannot say "Our Father,"
  Though very hard he tries,
And lifts, with such a gentle grace,
  His heavenly little eyes.

Our darling little Harry!
  He's loved the best of all,—
From mother's calm and thoughtful eyes
  I've seen a tear-drop fall,
As sleeping sweetly on her breast,
  The dear, dear, child would lie,
And she has looked long in his face,—
  I know the reason why:

I've heard her say to dear Papa—
"This babe so sweet and pure:
So all unlike an earth-born child,
He will not live, I'm sure,"
But Papa always smiles, and says,
"That's just the reason why,
Of all the dear ones given to us,
Our Harry should not die."

Papa is right—sweet Harry!
He's just the one to stay:
His purity and innocence
Will evil keep away.
If James gets cross, or little Will
And Anna fretful grow—
Bring Harry in the midst, and smiles
On all their faces glow.

A DOMESTIC SKETCH.

HOW TO CORRECT A HUSBAND'S FAULTS.

"Now, just look at you, Mr. Jones!—I declare! it gives me a chill to see you go to a drawer. What do you want?—Tell me, and I'll get it for you."

Mrs. Jones springs to the side of her husband, who was gone to the bureau for something, and pushes him away.

"There now! Just look at the hurrah's nest you have made! What do you want, Mr. Jones?"

The husband throws an angry look upon his wife, mutters something that she cannot understand, and then turns away and leaves the room.

"It is too bad!" scolds Mrs. Jones, to herself, commencing the work of restoring to order the drawer that her husband has thrown topsy-turvy.

"I never saw such a man! He has no kind of order about him; and then, if I speak a word, he goes off in a huff. But I wont have my things for ever in confusion."

In the mean time, Mr. Jones, in a pet, leaves the house, and goes to his store without a clean pocket-handkerchief for which he had been in search. Half of the afternoon passes before he gets over the ill humor, and then he does not feel happy. Mrs. Jones is by no means comfortable in mind. She is really sorry that she spoke so roughly, although she does not acknowledge, even to herself, that she has done wrong, for, every now and then, she utters some censure against the careless habits that were really annoying and inexcusable. They had been married five years, and all that time Mrs. Jones had complained, but to no good purpose. Sometimes the husband would get angry, and, sometimes, he would laugh at his wife; but he made no effort to reform himself.

"Mr. Jones, why will you do so?" said Mrs. Jones, on the evening of the same day. "You are the most trying man alive."

"Pity you hadn't the chance to try another," retorted Mr. Jones, sarcastically.

The offence given was a careless overturning of Mrs. Jones's work basket, and the scattering of needles, cottons, scissors, wax, and a dozen little etceteras about the floor.

The reply of Mr. Jones hurt his wife. It seemed unkind. He had brought home a new book, which he had intended reading; but the face of Mrs. Jones looked so grave after the overturning of the work-basket, that he felt no disposition to read to her, but contented himself with enjoying the book himself.

It must be said that Mr. Jones was a very trying man indeed; as his wife had alleged. He could open closets and drawers as handily as any one, but the thought of shutting either, never entered his mind. The frequent reproofs of his wife, such as—

"Had you any doors in the house where you were raised?" or,

"Please to shut the drawer, will you Mr. Jones?" or,

"You are the most disorderly man in existence," or,

"You are enough to try the patience of a saint, Mr. Jones," produced no effect. In fact, Mr. Jones seemed to grow worse and worse every day instead of better. The natural habits of order and regularity which his life possessed, were not respected in the least degree. He drew his boots off in the parlor, and left them in the middle of the floor, put his hat on the piano, instead of hanging it on the rack in the passage—tumbled her drawers whenever he went to them—left his shaving apparatus on the dressing table or bureau—splashed the water about, and spoiled the wall paper in washing, and spite of all that could be said to him, would neglect to take the soap out of the basin—spattered every thing round him with blacking when he brushed his boots,—and did a hundred other careless things, that gave his wife a world of trouble, annoyed her sorely, and kept her scolding him nearly all the time. This scolding worried him a good deal, but it never for a moment made him think seriously about reforming his bad habits.

One day he came in to dinner. It was a hot day. He went up into the chamber where his wife was sitting, and threw himself into a large rocking chair; took off his hat and tossed it over upon the bed right in the midst of half a dozen lace collars, newly done up; and kicked off his boots with such energy that one of them landed upon the bureau, and the other in the clothes-basket, soiling a white dress just from the ironing-table. Poor Mrs. Jones was grievously tried. The husband expected a storm, but no storm broke. He looked at his wife as she lifted his hat from the bed and put it on the mantelpiece, and took his boots and put them in a closet, from which she brought out his slippers and placed them beside him, but did not understand the expression of her face exactly, nor feel comfortable about it. Mrs. Jones did not seem angry, but hurt. After she had handed him his slippers, she took the soiled dress from the clothes-basket, over which she had spent nearly half an hour at the ironing-table, and attempted to remove the dirt that the boots had left upon it. But she tried in vain. The pure white muslin was hopelessly soiled, and would have to go into the washing tub before it would again be fit to wear.

"If you knew, Henry," she said, in a voice that touched her husband's feelings, as she laid aside the dress, "how much trouble you give me, sometimes, I am sure you would be more particular."

"Do I really give you much trouble, Jane?" Mr. Jones asked, as if a new idea had broken in upon his mind. "I am sure I am sorry for it."

"Indeed, you do. If you would only be more thoughtful and orderly, you would save me a great deal. I shall have to wash out this dress myself, now, for the washerwoman is gone, and I can't trust Sally with it. I spent nearly half an hour in ironing it to-day, hot as it is."

"I am very sorry, indeed, Jane. It was a careless trick in me, I must confess; and if you will forgive me, I will promise not to offend again."

All this was new. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jones felt surprised at themselves and each other. He had offended, and she did not get angry; she had been annoyed, and he was really sorry for what he had done. Light broke into both their minds, and both made an instant resolution to be more careful in future of their words and actions towards each other; and they were more careful. In the exercise of self-denial, the change has become radical.

ALL FOR THE BEST.

"ALL is for the best," said one to a merchant who had met with heavy losses.

"It is not for the best that I should lose my property;" indignantly replied the merchant.

"The Lord's providence deals intimately with the affairs of men," said the other, "and all these dealings are for good."

But the merchant spurned the sentiment. His heart was placed on riches. He looked upon money as the greatest good. Loss of wealth was, therefore, in his mind, the greatest evil that could befall him.

"It is not for the best," he said in his heart; and with something of the spirit in which the fool said—"No God!"

The disaster proved total. The merchant, yet quite a young man, became bankrupt. Nor was this all. A marriage contract in a wealthy family was broken off, thus visiting him with a double calamity.

"All for the best!" he said to himself, bitterly, recurring to the sentiment which had been uttered in his ears. "No! It is not for the best. Why have I been dealt with so harshly? Of what crime have I been guilty? Whose ox, or whose ass, have I taken unjustly? I have been frowned upon without a cause."

In this state he remained for months, and then made another effort. On a few hundred dollars he commenced business once more, and with hard labor and slow progress made his way again along the road to success. She to whom he had been engaged in marriage, was united to a more wealthy lover; and he sought a union with one whose external circumstances corresponded with his own. In wedding, he wedded happily. The partner of his bosom was a true woman, and their hearts were joined in the tenderest affection.

Years came and went, and many precious children blessed their union. Prosperity crowned the merchant's efforts. He gathered in wealth, but prized it less for its possession than its use.

"What now?" said the one who had previously referred to the dark dispensation of Providence. "Is all for the best? or does your heart still doubt?"

"I see it clearer, yet, sometimes I doubt;" said the merchant.

"But for you loss of property," said the other, "you would have married the daughter of Mr. Humphrey?"

"Yes."

"And she would have been the mother of your children?"

"Yes."

"Have you heard of her conduct?"

"No. What has she done?"

"Yesterday she deserted her husband, leaving a babe three months old, and has gone off with an opera singer."

"It cannot be!"

"Alas! It is too true."

"Wretched creature! Oh! who could have believed her heart so corrupt!"

"Was not the loss of your wealth a blessing, seeing that it has saved both you and your children from disgrace and wretchedness?"

"A blessing? Thrice a blessing! Yes, yes. It was for the best. I see, I feel, I acknowledge it."

"Heaven knows what is best for us, and orders all for good, if we only perform our duty. Not, however, our mere natural good, but our spiritual well-being. God is spiritual and eternal, and all his providences in regard to his creatures look to spiritual and eternal ends. Thus, while the saving of you and your children from this calamity, may conduce to your higher good its permission to fall upon another man and his children may be the means of their spiritual elevation. All that occurs in each one's life, is designed to react upon his peculiar character; and this is the reason why one man is visited by calamity, and another spared; and is the reason why one man is permitted to get rich, while another, struggle as he will, remains poor. God directs and overrules all for good, in individuals as well as nations. All is under his eye, and not a sparrow falls without his observation."

THE SPHERE OF USE.

In all useful employments there is, for the mind, a sustaining power.

"How were you able to live through that great affliction?" was asked of a gentleman, who had, some years before, lost his only son, a promising young man, just as he had finished his education, and was about taking his place on the stage of active, professional life.

"It was the severest blow I had ever felt," replied the gentleman; "a blow that caused every fibre in my heart to quiver. But I was able to bear it."

"I give you credit for possessing great fortitude. Such a blow would have carried me to the earth."

"No; I do not possess more fortitude than other men," was replied. "I did not stand up in my own strength."

"But put your trust in Heaven."

"I did."

"You had strong confidence. How many look up and pray for strength in affliction, and yet find none."

"I did not ask strength as a gift from Heaven," replied the gentleman.

"No!" The friend spoke in a tone of surprise.

"For the power to bear affliction cannot be conferred upon the mind."

"I do not comprehend your meaning," said the friend."

"A man might pray for ever that God would sustain him in affliction, and yet find no comfort, if he did not put himself in the way of consolation."

"How is he to put himself in the way?"

"By engaging in useful employments. But for this resource, I should have sunk down into gloomy despondency, and been wretched beyond description. While my boy lay sick and my heart was trembling in fear of his loss, I did not omit a single professional duty. I went regularly to my office, and transacted every item of business with scrupulous exactness, specially regarding, as I did so, the good of those who had called upon me for service. And when death removed my son, I did not sit down in my affliction and pray for sustaining grace. That would have been worse than idle. But, I went daily to my office, and devoted as much time and attention to my professional duties as before. Thus, the sphere of use sustained me. Had I neglected a single case in my hands; had I sought relief in a cessation of work, and tried to divert my mind from its sorrow by visiting new scenes, I would have sunk into the deepest gloom. As it was, however, I was kept in a state of resignation that occasionally approached cheerfulness. Sometimes I wonder at the fortitude with which I went through the fiery trial; but when I reflect upon it, I see clearly wherein lay the strength by which I kept my head above the waters."

Yes, strength to bear affliction with becoming patience is only given in the degree that the sufferer engages in useful work. Then thought turns itself away from sorrow, and becomes interested in the well-being and well-doing of others; and into such a state of mind there is an influx of healing from heaven.

This is a secret of life that all would do well to lay up in their hearts; if not for present, yet for future use. Few pass far on their journey without the need of comfort, and here is a source of true consolation to which all may go in sorrow.

THE OLD MAN TO HIS WIFE.

'Twas in the blessed spring time,
Sweet sang the bonny bird,
And music from the happy stream
Amid the brake was heard,—
Young Zephyr, waked from slumber,
Among the bright leaves played;
Or toss'd the plumy branches high,
Along the green arcade.

Dear Jenny! You remember
That happy, happy day;
Love's sunbeam fell upon us then,
And chased the night away.
I whispered low my passion,
You gently leaned to hear;
Then, in strong words of eloquence,
I charmed your willing ear.

I wooed you then, my Jenny,
I woo'd you then, my love;
The earth all beautiful around
And bright the sky above.

And soon we wedded, Jenny—
  You remember, too, that day,
When, side by side, we stood within
  The old church, far away,—

The old church, wreathed with ivy,
  Amid the old gray stones
Where have been laid, for ages past,
  Our old forefathers' bones.
Oh! often now, dear Jenny!
  I think of that old place—
'Twas in that old church, far away,
  I first looked on your face.

'Tis many years, dear Jenny,
  Since that May time of life,
When you, so young and innocent,
  Became my happy wife.
We've pass'd the warm, ripe summer,
  We've reaped the golden grain,
And, now it is the autumn time,
  And we're alone again.

Alone? Yes, for our birdies,
  Full-fledged, have left their nest,
And, on strong wings, have gone to seek
  Some other place of rest.

Oh! tenderly we loved them,
When pure, and sweet, and young;
And tenderly we love them still,
To riper manhood sprung.

As in the early, happy years,
Our sun is warm and bright,
And though the days are shorter now,
We bless, as then, the light;—
But we're thinking now, dear Jenny!
Of another, better clime,
Where love has still a warmer ray,
Beyond the bounds of time.

GOOD FOR EVIL.

John Tiller was a thrifty farmer in the western part of Pennsylvania, whose well cultivated acres contrasted strongly with those of his neighbor, Peter Ellis, who was neither very industrious nor very intelligent in agricultural matters, but exhausted his lands, year after year, by bad farming, precisely as his father had done before him, and laughed at all scientific farmers, and at Mr. Tiller in particular, as "new lights." Of course, no one ever saw the "Cultivator," "American Farmer," or "Ploughman," in his house. It was his boast, that he never read one of these "catch-pennies" in his life; and that he had set his dog on a "loafing vagabond" who had the impudence to ask him to subscribe for one of them.

Ellis did not like Tiller, and was barely civil towards him when they happened to meet. If any one had asked him the reason why he cherished unkind feelings towards his neighbor, he would have found it hard to answer the question, even to his own satisfaction. The true cause lay, probably, in the fact that almost everybody liked Tiller and spoke well of him; while he had no very warm friends. The superior productiveness of Tiller's farm, a thing too plain to be denied, was also a source of annoyance. Two of their fields, lying side by side, were, one season, both planted in corn. They had been laid down in grass, and, for three or four years, furnished the two farmers with their winter's hay. Tiller's field however, gave him one-third more than Ellis obtained, at which the latter always felt in an ill humor. Without consultation, or knowing each other's intention, both commenced ploughing their field on the same day.

"What are you going to plant there?" asked Mr. Ellis of one of Tiller's farm hands.

"Corn," was replied.

A kind of grunt, the usual expression of contempt and displeasure with which Ellis received any information in regard to his neighbor's doings, was the only reply made by the farmer as he turned away. Then he muttered to himself—

"I wonder who told him that I was going to plant corn here. He kept his field in hay a great deal longer than he wanted to, I know, just to annoy me by bragging about his two or three tons to the acre. I'd like to see the scales on which they were weighed. Humph! We shall now hear of seventy bushels of corn, no doubt. But I'll not be fool enough to believe it. If the real truth were known, it would turn out that my farm is just as productive as his, notwithstanding all the noise he makes about his bone dust, poudrette, and the old scratch knows what all."

The two fields were planted with corn, the one under that enlightened system of farming, which gives to each product of the soil the food which experience and philosophy determine that it requires for its most luxuriant growth, and the other in the good old way that Peter Ellis had seen the thing done since he was old enough to walk over a cornfield.

About June, the two fields began to look quite green. But the green of Tiller's was darker, and his plants taller. Ellis saw that this was so, although he maintained stoutly that his field looked quite as well as the other, and would yield every grain as much corn.

'You see with partial eyes, Peter," said a neighbor to him, one day, after he had made this assertion. "Tiller's corn looks far better than yours."

This made Ellis angry, and he more than half insulted his neighbor, who left him soon after and walked away. In passing near the bars that opened into the field of Tiller, the neighbor met the more thrifty farmer. After standing and chatting awhile, he said—

"What ails your corn all about here? It looks as if the cattle had been eating it."

"Friend Ellis, over there, has a very troublesome cow," replied Tiller, in a mild way, "that has a trick of opening gates and letting down bars. She got in here some time this morning, and did considerable damage before we discovered her.

"Too bad! too bad!" said the neighbor. "I know her ladyship very well. She has been in my fields dozens of times. But I have worried her so with the dogs that she's got a little shy of my premises. Set your dogs on her, Mr. Tiller. It's your only remedy. She'll destroy your whole field, now that she's got a taste of them green blades, if you don't look out."

"I dislike to do that, for my dogs are rather sharp, and Peter is an unhappy sort of a man, you know, and apt to take umbrage. I'd rather lose a little corn than put him into a passion. No doubt I can fix the bars so that she cannot get in."

"You'll have to fix them pretty tight then. I tried fixing gates and bars, but she was too much for me. I never saw such a beast. As to Peter's getting into a passion, that is a small consideration. He can get into a passion as easily as his cow can open a gate."

"He's not a very agreeable neighbor certainly; but, then, he's his own worst enemy, and we should pity and soothe, rather than irritate him. He seems all the time fretted with me about something, and I would rather seek to allay than increase this unhappy state of mind."

"That is all very well, Mr. Tiller, and I know your good feeling towards Peter; but a man can't stand and see his labor all destroyed and not make an effort to prevent it. It is every one's duty to take care of his own. I think it as much your duty to protect your cornfield, as it is Peter's duty to keep his cow from trespassing upon it. If he won't do his part, you are bound to do yours."

"Very true; but if I can do it without arousing an unhappy spirit in him, why, so much the better."

"Certainly—certainly. But *if* is the word."

"I must try."

"And I hope you will be successful; but I have my doubts."

After his neighbor had left him, Tiller took a hatchet that he had in his hand, and cut a couple of stout wedges which he drove tightly into one end of the middle bars.

"I guess she'll find them rather hard to get down," he said, with a smile, as he tried them with his hand.

On the next morning, when Mr. Tiller looked out, the first object that met his eyes was Peter's old browney in his cornfield, enjoying herself finely.

"Just see that!" he exclaimed, with a good deal of excitement, starting from the house. His first impulse was to whistle for the dogs; but he checked this, and called to one of his men to go and turn the animal out. In performing this task, the man made the stones fly about her head pretty freely. But none of them happened to strike her. On examining the bars, the wedges were found lying on the ground. It was plain that the cow had partially moved the bars up and down, with her head and horns, until the wedges became loosened and then dropped out. They were replaced, and driven in hard this time. Several times during the day the cow was seen at the bars, but she couldn't move them.

When Mr. Tiller got up and looked from his window, on the following morning, there was the cow again in his cornfield! Quite out of patience, he hurried down stairs, saying as he did so—

"I must try the dogs. There is no help for it."

Watch and Wolf were called, and away they bounded for the offending animal and set upon her fiercely. Wolf seized her by the nose, and Watch made several efforts to fasten upon her shoulder, but without success. Mad with pain and affright, the cow ran for the opening at which she had made her entry, dragging Wolf, who held on vigorously. Only the two middle bars had been removed; the upper and lower ones still remained in their places. In passing through this narrow opening, the cow, who was going at full speed, struck one horn against the upper bar and broke it from her head. She fell forward, clear of the field, and, as she fell, the fangs of the dog tore through her nostrils.

Almost from the instant Mr. Tiller saw his two fierce dogs bound away towards the poor animal, he regretted having called in their aid, and endeavored to stop them. But they heeded not his voice. With the intention of driving them off, he ran after them, and came up to the bars immediately after the cow fell. Wolf had again seized her, but the imperative voice of his master subdued the instinct of his nature. He quitted his hold and retired. At the same time, the cow got up and moved quickly away, bleeding from both her head and nostrils.

The whirl of excitement into which the circumstance had thrown the mind of Mr. Tiller had not yet subsided, and he stood irresolute as to whether he should go at once and see Peter Ellis, explain how the damage to his cow had been occasioned and express his sorrow for it, when the sharp crack of a gun and a yell from Wolf startled him from his state of perplexity and indecision. Turning his eyes quickly in the direction from which the report came, he saw his neighbor with his rifle in his hand. He was re-loading it. Within twenty yards of where Mr. Tiller was standing, Wolf was writhing upon the ground and howling in pain. Watch stood with a frightened look a few paces farther off. The rapidity with which Ellis was re-loading his gun, made it evident to the mind of Tiller that it was his intention to shoot the other dog. In order to prevent this, he called Watch to his side, and placing his hand upon his neck, threw his own body in such a position as to protect him.

As soon as Ellis had finished loading his gun, he raised it in his hands and called out in a loud, angry, imperative voice—

"Stand a one side there!"

But the owner of the dog did not move.

"Get out of the way, I tell you!"

The gun was now raised to the shoulder and pointed at the spot where Tiller was standing, who began really to fear that his excited neighbor would fire at the dog, even at the risk of striking him with the ball. He, however, stood firm. Slowly, at length, the breech of the rifle sunk down from the shoulder of Peter, who, as if some sudden resolution had been taken, started forward and came with long strides towards the spot where Tiller was standing. Wolf continued his yells and writhings, but both became less and less vigorous, showing that either the pain of his wound was abating, or that life was ebbing rapidly away. It mattered little which of these was the case, for another ball from the rifle of Ellis, who had paused within twenty or thirty yards of Tiller, put an end to his sufferings.

"Peter Ellis," said Tiller, in a firm, but not angry voice, as the former began again to load his gun—"will you hear reason?"

"I'll shoot your other dog, if I die for it; and you too, if you don't get out of the way!"

"But hear what I have to say, first, friend Ellis."

"Don't 'friend' me! I understand your smooth-faced, canting hypocrisy. Any man who would butcher a poor animal as you have butchered my cow, deserves to be shot down like a dog. Now take care of yourself!"

"As Peter said this, he presented his rifle again at the dog, who was crouching down behind his master. Tiller was a calm, cool, brave man, and he did not, therefore, move, nor order his dog away. For nearly a minute, Ellis stood with his finger upon the trigger, pointing his rifle at the head of Watch, which projected a few inches beyond his master's knee. Passion prompted him to fire at all hazards, but the fear of worse consequences than merely killing a dog, made him hesitate.

"You might just as well get out of the way first as last," said he, again dropping the rifle; "for I'll shoot that dog. I've sworn it, and I'll do it."

"But, Peter Ellis, first listen to me. I am ——"

"I don't want to hear anything! I want none of your soft speeches. Look at my cow there;

that's enough for me. But you'll be sorry for it! I'll have my revenge. I'll pay you up for old scores, and this into the bargain."

"I had no intention of hurting your cow, Peter. I only——"

"Bah!"

Thus ejaculating, while he almost foamed with passion, the angry farmer turned away and left Mr. Tiller, grieved and perplexed, with his dog crouching at his feet. Wolf was already dead. As soon as Ellis had gone out of sight, Tiller replaced the bars and walked slowly back to the house, feeling rather unhappy.

"So much for permitting myself to get angry," said he, mentally. "If I had driven the cow out quietly, and then taken a little more trouble in fastening the bars, all this might have been saved. But now his poor cow is badly injured, Wolf is dead, and the worst passions of this unhappy man are aroused. But this is the way; when we lose command of ourselves, there is no telling what evil consequences may follow."

Before dinner time Watch was shot, almost at the door of Mr. Tiller. The latter was sitting in the house, when the loud report of his neighbor's rifle, followed quickly by the yells of the poor dog, smote upon his ear. He ran out and saw Ellis walking slowly away, with his gun in his hand, and Watch dragging his maimed body painfully across the yard. A quick flash of indignation burned on the cheek of Mr. Tiller; but he controlled himself with an effort, saying as he did so—

"I trust he is now satisfied."

On examining the dog, it was found that both hind legs were broken, and that there was a deep wound under the shoulder. A ball through the animal's heart, from his master's rifle, sent in sorrow and kindness, put an end to his misery.

As to the hope that Peter Ellis would now be satisfied, that proved to be fallacious. He had a clear case against his neighbor, and he determined to make the most of it. Old browney's torn nostrils and disfigured head were ever before him, and kept alive his indignation. The evidences of its continued existence were apparent to Mr. Tiller in various ways. One day a fine turkey would be found lying close to his fence, on some part of Ellis's farm, dead, a ball through its body. On another, a favorite ewe, in the same condition, its lambs bleating about their unconscious dam. Nothing that belonged to Mr. Tiller could commit the smallest trespass on the land of Ellis, without suffering the death-penalty.

At length a yearling colt, of the very finest breed, for which Tiller had repeatedly refused three hundred dollars, made his way through a gap in a fence that divided one of his fields from a field that belonged to Peter Ellis, in which wheat was growing.

This fence had been put up, originally, at the joint expense of the owners of the two farms, and there was a written agreement or contract between them, that it was to be kept in perfect repair one year by Ellis, and the next by Tiller, and so on alternately. This year it was the duty of Ellis to see to the repairs. It usually happened that most of the repairing was done in the year that the contract made it obligatory on Mr. Tiller to keep it in good order.

The eyes of Peter Ellis, if they saw nothing else, never failed to discover any trespass that was committed on his farm by an animal so unfortunate as to be owned by John Tiller. The yearling had not been enjoying himself in Peter's wheat field for more than ten minutes, when the fact was discovered. A grin of satisfaction lit up the face of the ill-natured farmer as he took down his rifle and hastily emerged from the house. When he returned, the beautiful animal was quivering in the pangs of death.

The neighbor who had advised Tiller to set his dogs on Peter's old browney, met him at his gate about an hour after this occurrence, and said to him—

"I'm sorry to see that fine colt of yours dead up in the field yonder. How in the world did it happen?"

"My colt dead! Ain't you mistaken?"

"I believe not. I saw a colt lying dead as I came along, and took it for yours; and I don't think I'm mistaken."

"Where is he?"

"Just on the edge of Peter Ellis's wheat-field."

"In his field?"

"Yes."

"It can't be possible that he has shot my colt! Sheep and turkeys and chickens enough to pay for two cows, let alone for a cow's horn, have already been sacrificed to that man's evil passions. Surely his malignant spirit has not carried him thus far!"

A hurried walk to the spot mentioned by the neighbor, dispelled this illusion.

"This is certainly carrying matters too far," he said, speaking calmly, and yet in a very serious voice. "The colt, I see, has broken into his field through a gap in the fence there, which, by written agreement, it is his duty to keep in repair this year."

"Then you can make him pay for the colt. The case is plain enough," remarked the neighbor.

"I have twice refused three hundred dollars for the animal."

"If I'm on the jury when the case comes before court, I will give you my voice for four hundred dollars."

"I should hardly like to sue him," Tiller replied to this.

"You're bound to do it. It's your duty to the community as well as to yourself. If this miserable creature is allowed to go on unchecked, in this way, nobody's property in the neighborhood will be safe."

"I'll see Peter before I determine upon any such course of action. I was to blame, in the first place, for setting my dogs, which I knew to be strong, fierce animals, upon his cow, instead of driving her out again, and making another effort to secure the bars. If I had not permitted myself to get into a passion, I would not have done it. So much for being angry! I have been well punished for it. If he will now feel himself satisfied, and stop all his retaliatory conduct, I rather think I may be inclined to let him alone, although he has certainly laid himself liable to damages."

"He'll insult you if you call upon him, see if he don't. He's as bitter as gall against you." "No matter. I will at least see him. If he acts like an insane man, from the violence of uncontrolled passions, it is no reason why I should not keep myself cool, and look somewhat to his good as well as my own. Suing him will only engender more bile in his heart, and make him a worse man, and still more unhappy than he now is. The loss of my fine colt is a serious matter; but not so serious as the extinguishment of a good impulse in the heart of a fellow creature."

"Precious few good impulses are there in the heart of Peter Ellis," replied the neighbor."

"All are not entirely bad," said Mr. Tiller. "For a man like Ellis, we should make many allowances, and try if it be not possible to awaken some good emotions in his bosom, rather than destroy their latent life by harshness."

"That all sounds very fair, Mr. Tiller," was replied to this. "But I think when a man outrages the rights of another in the way this man has outraged yours, that he ought to be made to feel the consequences of what he has done, and that, too, pretty severely. I must own, that I would feel some satisfaction in seeing him smarting a little for his conduct."

But Mr. Tiller had nothing of a revengeful temper in him. He rather possessed what too few men have—a noble and generous regard for the good of others. He went direct from the wheat-field where his dead colt lay, to the house of Peter Ellis. That individual saw him coming, and made up his mind to give him a pretty warm reception. The very sight of Tiller had its usual effect, that of arousing his bitterest spirit. He did not move from where he was, to meet him, but remained sitting until he entered the room, whither a domestic had conducted him. He then arose to his feet, and stood still where he was, with knit brows, tightly compressed lips, and eyes fixed with a look of defiance upon his visitor. Tiller advanced to within a few feet of him, and then said in a mild voice—

"Mr. Ellis, did you shoot my colt?"

"Yes, I did!" was the firm reply.

"Why did you do so?"

The eye of Ellis glanced quickly to the wall, and his upraised finger pointed to the spot upon which he fixed his look—

"There is your answer!" he said.

On looking up, Tiller saw old browney's horn suspended from a nail. He understood the meaning of Ellis, and replied—

"Two sheep, two dogs, three turkeys, and half a dozen chickens, it seems to me, ought, in all conscience, to have been considered a fair equivalent for the loss of a cow's horn. Reflect for a moment, and I am sure you will say that I am right."

This, so plain and cool a proposition, only had the effect to make Ellis outrageously angry, and cause him to lavish all sorts of abuse, and make all manner of charges against Mr. Tiller, who, finding that he could make nothing out of his neighbor, sought an opportunity to say in a very decided manner—

"Peter Ellis, for all that is past I will forgive you, but upon this condition, that nothing of mine be harmed by you under any pretence whatever. If the smallest injury be, hereafter, wilfully done to anything belonging to me, I will tell you what I will do; and if I say it, you may be sure that I will keep my word."

"What is that?" asked Ellis, with a bitter sneer.

Tiller replied calmly—

"I have, as you well know, a copy of an agreement, signed by you as well as by myself, in which you are bound to keep the fence, which separates your field from mine, in good repair every alternate year. You are also well aware, that in the present year you have those repairs to look after. It is plain, therefore, that my colt would not have trespassed on your field, if you had not permitted the fence to get out of order; and it is equally plain, that all I have to do, is to sue you for damages, and recover from you the value of the animal you have killed. This I will certainly do, if you injure anything belonging to me from this day forth. I am sorry you have compelled me to make this threat; I did not want to do it. But to permit you any longer to injure me as you have for some time been doing, would be no virtue on my part. Strangely enough," he continued, seeing that Ellis did not meditate a reply, "you have looked upon me as an enemy, when I wish to be regarded as a friend. Try and consider me as such hereafter, and it may be better for both of us."

After saying this, Mr. Tiller retired, and left his somewhat astonished neighbor to his own reflections, which were by no means very agreeable. That was a new view of the case, altogether, which had been presented. He saw that he was completely in the power of Tiller, who had only to bring this matter before the court, and he would certainly be compelled to pay the value of the animal he had so wantonly killed, besides all costs of prosecution that might arise. The case was too plain to afford a chance for successful litigation on his part. Deeply chafed in spirit was he to find himself so completely in the power of a man he almost hated, though without a cause; and, also, to find that this man, when he could put his foot upon his neck, had the magnanimity not to do so. The caution of Tiller had its desired effect. No more injury was done to anything belonging to him.

What Ellis had done, quickly became known throughout the neighborhood; and there were many who strongly urged Tiller to sue him and recover the value of his colt. But he could not be induced to take that step. Some praised his forbearance, and some blamed him; but all were more or less incensed at Ellis.

Things were very quiet after this, notwithstanding old browney forgot the severe lesson she had learned, and with her one horn, a standing and pointed rebuke to Mr. Tiller whenever he saw it, which was pretty often, managed to let down bars and open gates as well as ever. Her depredations were, however, generally guarded against by timely care in making all things fast. Ellis was very shy of his neighbor, and kept out of his way as much as possible. When they did meet, Tiller always spoke to him kindly.

A good farmer does not get rich very fast, and a bad one is sure to go behind hand. Peter Ellis was a bad farmer, and instead of bettering his condition, year after year, became, as might be supposed, worse and worse off. One debt after another came into existence, and pressed him down, until, at length, his whole farm was about passing into the hands of the sheriff for the purpose of satisfying a debt of six hundred dollars, held by a man who felt very little like sparing his farm from the law's extremity.

When this fact came to the ears of Tiller, he said to the person who mentioned it to him—

"Do you really think his farm will be sold by this man in order to recover his debt?"

"I have no doubt of it in the world," was replied. "He has an old grudge against him, and will be glad of a good opportunity to satisfy it. I don't think Ellis has any right to complain. As he would have done to you or any one else he happened not to like, so will he be done by."

"But it is a pity to break any man up in this way. His farm will be sacrificed for half its value."

"No doubt of that. But, who can help it? If his creditor pushes for his own, the law gives him a right to do just as he is doing."

"True. But might we not all join and help him a little? I am willing to do my part. What do you say?"

"I don't believe you will find a man in the neighborhood who would turn his finger to help him. I know that I shall not risk a penny."

Mr. Tiller mused over the difficulty in which Ellis was placed, for some time, after he was alone. He forgot all about the difference that had existed between him and Peter, and thought only of the means of saving him from the sacrifice of his property. At length, satisfied with the result of his reflections, he started for the residence of Ellis with the air of a man who had made up his mind as to what he was going to do.

Peter sat alone, brooding over the misfortune that was about to wrest from his hands the old family homestead. Judgment had been obtained against him for six hundred dollars, an execution issued, and the sheriff had already levied upon his property. He had tried to obtain security and thus put off the evil day, but no one to whom he ventured to apply was willing to run any risks for a man like Peter Ellis. If it had not been for the encumbrance of an old mortgage upon his farm, he could have found persons ready enough to go security, if made perfectly safe by a pledge of the real estate under execution. But the mortgage put that out of the question.

The thought of giving up the old homestead, where, as a child, he had been happy, and, even as a man, seen many pleasant seasons, softened the feelings of Peter Ellis into a gentler mood than they had known for a long time. Every object upon which his eyes rested, now, strangely enough, brought back some memory of childhood; some vision of those early times, that seem to grow brighter and brighter as we look back upon them through the lengthening vista of years. The surface of his mind was no longer darkly ruffled by the too long prevailing winds of passion that had blown over it, nor were its depths agitated by the long ground swell of angry emotions. All was calm. He was powerless in the strong hand of the law, and, in conscious impotence, his heart was oppressed with sadness. He was sitting near a table, with many loose papers and letters before him which he had been examining. They, too, had helped to throw his mind back upon the past. Overcome by his feelings, he had leaned his head upon his hand and was sitting thus when the door of his room was opened and some one came in. He turned his head, and there stood the man for whom he had cherished, for years, a bitter dislike, —why, he would have found it hard to explain.

The sight of Tiller did not arouse his old feelings. He was too much subdued for causeless anger now.

Rising up, he received him with cool formality. As soon as Tiller was seated, he said, speaking very kindly, and with much sympathy in his voice—

"It grieves me to hear that you are in trouble; but I trust some means of relief may be found. I have come as your friend, if you will permit me to act as such towards you. In fact, I have always been your friend rather than your enemy, and have often felt sorry that you would not think so. But let the past go, with all its mistakes. You are in trouble, and if I can help you, I am ready to do so. Will you accept the kind offices I tender you, in all sincerity?"

At this unexpected appearance and address, Peter Ellis was quite overcome. His lips quivered, and his hands and fingers moved about uneasily. It was some moments before he could reply. He then said in a low, unsteady voice—

"I did not expect this of you, Mr. Tiller, after what has passed."

"Let the past go with all its missteps, as I have just said," replied Mr. Tiller, cheerfully. "The best are liable to error. I have never cherished unkind feelings towards you; much less do I entertain them now. I wish to assist you, if I can, in your present difficulty. I am told that your farm is under execution for six hundred dollars, and that, on account of its being mortgaged, you cannot indemnify any one for going your security."

"It is too true, Mr. Tiller," replied Peter, in a desponding voice.

"Very well; now, in a word, I will tell you what I will do. You have a ten-acre field that is almost worn out. If you will agree to let me cultivate that field for four or five years, which I can do with extra hands, at no great expense of time or care, I will at once advance you the money you need, and, at the end of the time named, after deducting interest and a reasonable per centage, hand you whatever profit I may have made over and above the sum now advanced."

Ellis looked at Tiller for some moments, with surprise and doubt strangely blended in the expression of his face.

"If you are in earnest in what you propose," he at length said, in a subdued tone, "I can only reply, that I accept your offer with heartfelt gratitude. You will save me from ruin. But you will never get your money out of that field in the time you name."

"I am perfectly willing to run that risk. But come over to my house, and we will have this matter speedily arranged. The sooner it is done the better."

Peter Ellis, as he walked along in silence beside the man who was proving himself to be his best friend, although he had treated him for years as an enemy, and injured him severely, had many strange thoughts and strange feelings. He hardly understood how a man could act so generous and so disinterested a part; and yet he felt that there must be a rich reward in thus seeking to do good to others instead of evil. On their way, they passed near the place where the colt had been shot. The remembrance of that act smote upon the heart of Ellis, and he resolved that, at the earliest possible day, he would make restitution—not only for this wrong done, but for others that Tiller had suffered at his hands.

When Peter Ellis returned home from the residence of his neighbor, it was with feelings and purposes all changed, and with a heart subdued and deeply grateful for a service he expected from no man, and least of all from John Tiller.

"Is it true," asked the neighbor before alluded to, on meeting Tiller a few days afterwards, "that you have loaned that miserable creature, Peter Ellis, enough money to pay his debt?"

"Yes. I loaned him what was needed to save him from ruin."

"On the security of what you might get out of his old, worn-out ten-acre field?"

"Yes."

"You are a strange man, friend Tiller—a very strange man; and if you don't see the day when you regret putting your hand in kindness, upon the head of that snarling wolf, whose teeth you have already felt too often, then I am mistaken. If you get six hundred cents out of his field you may be thankful. I'd have seen him to Jericho before I would have helped him."

"We shall see," was the quiet reply to this.

At the end of four years, Mr. Tiller called upon Ellis—whose conduct had, in no instance, during that time, given marked offence to any of his neighbors, and whose fields had become much more productive—and said to him—

"Our contract is now at an end. I have farmed your field for the period agreed upon, and have found it fertile and productive. You have looked on and seen how I worked it, and I shall be sincerely gratified if you will continue the system I have pursued towards the land, which needs to be farmed in a particular way; for then you will reap from it a profit fully equal to your labor. Your debt is canceled; and here are three hundred dollars surplus, after interest and a per centage on my labor have been deducted."

Mr. Tiller presented a small package of bank bills as he said this; but Ellis drew back, and replied emphatically, while the color rose to his face—

"No, Mr. Tiller, my debt is not yet paid, you must keep all: and even that will not make us fully clear. The colt, the sheep, the dogs and the poultry I killed when possessed by an evil spirit, must not be your loss but mine. I have always intended to pay for them, but have never before had it in my power. You have now enabled me to act justly, and I do so gladly. Ah! sir, your conduct towards me has been noble. You have saved me from my own evil heart!"

The quivering lips, failing voice, and humid eyes of Peter Ellis, attested the deepness of his emotions and the sincerity with which he spoke.

Mr. Tiller again tendered the money, saying that he wished nothing for the dead animals; that he had forgotten their loss. But Ellis was firm in his refusal to receive a dollar.

"It is yours, not mine, and I will not touch it," he said resolutely. "Now I can feel like a man who has honestly repaired the wrongs into which passion betrayed him."

"Well, friend Tiller, have you got your six hundred dollars out of that ten-acre field yet?" said the neighbor who had thought him a great fool for his pains in doing a kind act to Peter Ellis. This was on the day after the above interview occurred.

"Oh yes; and three hundred dollars for the colt and the sheep and poultry that were killed."

"What!"

"The net product of that field, after interest on the loan made to Ellis, and a per centage for my labor and outlay of capital, were deducted, was just nine hundred dollars. I took three hundred of this to Peter Ellis yesterday, but he refused to receive it. He said that he owed me fully that much for property which he had wantonly destroyed, and he now rejoiced in having an opportunity to pay it. He is very much altered."

"He certainly is. Everybody says that."

"Don't you think it has turned out much better than it would if I had sued him for damages when he shot my colt, as you so earnestly advised me to do!"

"There is no doubt of that. You have got your pay, and Peter has saved his farm."

"And is a better man," said Tiller.

"Yes,—that is plain."

"And is not that best of all?" was asked in an earnest voice.

"You are a strange man, friend Tiller," replied the neighbor. "I don't know any one who would have acted as you have done. But I rather guess you are right. By returning good for evil, you have made an honest man, a pleasant neighbor, and a thrifty farmer out of Peter Ellis, besides getting paid for all your losses by him. I wouldn't have believed it; but there is no denying what you see before your eyes as plain as noonday."

THE GREAT MAN.

BRING him of giant intellect,
And a soul high deeds to dare,
And a spirit that will not be crushed
By its weight of worldly care:
Whose pride can brook no rivalry—
Ambition, no delay,
Who will harden his heart 'gainst his fellow-men
If they hinder his onward way:—

And I will show you a nobler one—
He hath conquered his heart of pride,
And moveth in calm and silent joy
Still waters of peace beside:
Ambition he hath, but 'tis good to do—
Pride, of his Father above—
High purpose, to win a glorious crown
In the Kingdom of Truth and Love.

FADING FLOWERS.

One day, when a child, said a cheerful-minded friend who had passed over more than two-thirds of the time usually allotted to men on earth, I went into the field and gathered a bunch of beautiful wild flowers, which I placed in a vase on the mantel-piece. To my eyes they were beautiful, and, many times during the few hours that passed till evening, did I come in from my play to look at them. *I* had gathered and arranged them—they were *mine*—and therefore the more highly prized.

Early the next morning I arose, and dressing myself, went to look at my floral treasures. Alas! they had withered away, and hung with drooping heads over the side of the glass in which I had placed them. A few curled leaves, almost colourless, lay upon the floor, and upon some of them a careless foot had trodden.

For a moment I stood bewildered; then shrunk away into a corner of the room and commenced weeping and sobbing bitterly. My all of earthly happiness seemed wrecked.

My kind mother (I shall never forget her, nor her early lessons of love) came in while my young heart was trembling in its sorrow, and taking my hand, as she sat down by me, inquired in an anxious tone, the cause of my grief.

"My flowers," said I, sobbing more bitterly; it was all that my tongue could articulate.

Her mother's heart comprehended, the moment her eye caught my faded blossoms, the whole weight of my childish affliction. She did not speak for a few minutes, but raised me up and laid my head upon her bosom. The fond action calmed my infant transports of sorrow, and I soon looked up composedly into her face; she smiled on me with a smile a mother's countenance can only wear; but I well remember now that a tear was on her cheek.

I thought it strange at the time that my mother should weep; but I can now well imagine her feelings, as the little incident I have mentioned threw her thoughts upon the future and brought before her mind, in sad array, the many disappointments that would crowd my path, of which this one was but a gentle prelude.

She looked placidly on my face for a moment, which was upturned to hers, and then assuming a serious tone, implanted in my young mind one of her first lessons of patience and endurance—a lesson which has never been forgotten.

"My dear child," said she, "I am sorry that your flowers have faded; but you know there are many more in the fields, and much prettier ones in the garden. You can gather a new bouquet."

"But I gathered them, mother," said I, "and I liked them flowers better than any others, because they were *mine*." And I wept again to think that those very ones that *I* loved should have faded.

"Your flowers will often wither my child," answered my mother; "and though you may love your own more than any others, yet when their brightness and beauty are gone, you must remember that grieving cannot restore them. Every thing which brings to you pleasure is one of the flowers of life. Do you not love me more than all those pretty coloured leaves?"

I could not say yes—but the smiling tears that were in my eyes told her my feelings; and my little arms twined fondly about her neck, made the strongest affirmative her heart wanted.

"I am one of the flowers of life," continued she, "and so is your father, and so is sister Mary. But did you never think that one day these flowers would wither?"

I scarcely comprehended her meaning then, but I did not forget the words she uttered; and years after, when manhood was upon my brow, and I stood looking down into her grave, the whole truth of her question and allusion came upon my mind, and I wept anew in bitterness of spirit.

"Remember, my dear," said she, as I continued looking seriously into her face, but half conscious of the force of what she was saying, "that all along your ways through life will spring up pleasant flowers, and your hand will be constantly reaching out and plucking them—but, my child, they will all wither. Nothing on earth is permanent. All things are changing and passing away. You will indulge many brilliant anticipations, and, as you spring up to manhood, will have many hopes of happiness in this world; but disappointment will follow your steps wherever you tread, and the thorns of sorrow tear your hands often when you have reached them out to pluck the blossoms of joys. Yet amid all this, there is a virtue which takes largely away from the darkness of the picture; the virtue of patience. Do you not remember reading in the little book I gave you a day or two since, that

"To bear is to conquer our fate?"

That means, if we are patient under disappointment and grief, we will rob them of much of their painfulness. We make our sorrows deeper than they really are, by thinking and grieving over them. Learn to have patience under all circumstances, and your happiness will be more certain.

"And now, my child," continued she, "gather up those leaves from the floor; throw away the withered flowers, and get fresh ones."

I ran to the field as soon as I had done my breakfast, and collected another bunch as pretty as those I had the day before, and was happy in looking at them in their nice arrangement upon the shelf where I placed them.

In a day or two they faded also, but I remembered the words of my mother, and tried to learn patience. It was a hard lesson at first, but whenever anything went wrong, I still tried the remedy called patience, and soon found that it was a charm which robbed disappointment of most of its pain.

Ever since, said this friend, I have endeavoured to use patience under all circumstances, and find that it brings the mind nearer than anything else to that contentment which Campbell calls "The all in all of life."

STANZAS.

Come, loved one! smile the gloom away
That clouds thy fair young brow;
Tears have not dimmed thy soft blue eyes
For many a day, 'till now.
Believe me, thine are idle fears;
Mere airy nothing. Dry thy tears
That gush so warm and fast!
Strange! thou should'st doubt the love, for thee
That welleth up unceasingly.

I hold thee fondly to my heart;
Again I tell the tale
Young passion murmured first to thee
At eve in shadowy vale;
Thy trembling hand is fast in mine—
I lay my warm cheek thus to thine,
And woo thee, even as when
My love tale in thy willing ear
I poured, and saw thee weep to hear.

Now thou art happy! Dear one! why,
Oh why thus doubt the love,
That hath, but thee, no polar star,
Save that which guides above?
If care weigh down my spirit, smile,
And care shall own the pleasant wile,
And half forget its gloom,—
But do not, dearest, thus be moved,
In fear thou art not wholly loved.

I SAID SO!

"HE'LL be a ruined man in less than a year. Mark my words, and see if they do not come true."

This was said with an air, and in a tone of self-importance, by a brisk little fellow, who walked uneasily about as he spoke, and seemed to consider himself of no little consequence.

"I've had my eye on him for some months past," he continued, "and can see which way he is going, and where it will all end as clear as daylight."

"That's the way with you, Deal; you always see to the end of other people's courses," remarked a bystander.

"I can see to the end of Miller's course, and no mistake. See if he isn't all used up and gone to nothing before this day twelvemonth."

"Why do you prophecy so badly of Miller? He is one of the cleverest men I know."

"That's a fact, and no mistake. He is a gentleman all over. But that won't keep him from ruin."

"Give the reason,—you must have one."

"Oh, as to that, I don't give reasons for what I say," was the self-complacent reply, with a toss of the head and two or three strides across the room. "But, you mark my words, and see if they don't come true. See if Miller does not go to the wall before this time next year."

"Very well, we will see."

"So you will, or I'm no prophet."

The confident manner in which this man, named Deal, spoke, led several of those who heard him, to suppose that he knew some fact connected with the business of Miller with which they were ignorant. And this was true.

Deal was one of those restless, busy, here-there-and-every-where little bodies, who see and know far more of what is going on in the world than do your quiet, thoughtful, business-absorbed people. He visited the theatre once or twice every week: not really so much to observe the play, as to see who regularly attended. He looked into the different club-rooms and political assemblages, and kept his mind posted up in all the little and great matters that agitate the surface of a community, or stir it more deeply. His means of information in regard to his neighbors' business and prospects, were certainly very great, and his opinion in regard to these matters worth something. This fact made his remarks about Miller half believed by several who heard them. In truth he had good reasons for his evil prognostications, for he met too frequently at the theatre, and in very improper company, Miller's confidential clerk, and was, likewise, conversant with many facts proving that he was clearly unworthy of the trust that had been reposed in him. Instead of doing his duty, which was to promptly inform Miller of the conduct of his clerk, he contented himself, like too many others, with merely shrugging his shoulders, as has been seen, when occasion warranted his doing so, and prophecying ruin to the merchant who, unhappily, had placed confidence in an unworthy agent.

The business in which Miller was engaged, although it embraced very important transactions, and required many clerks for its efficient management, yielded only a light profit, so that it was in the power of a dishonest assistant to ruin his principal. It only required the abstraction of a few thousand dollars to embarrass and finally break up the merchant's business. The prospect of such an untoward event was very fair. The habits of young Grey, the name of the principal clerk, had, for more than a year, required for their gratification an amount of money much greater than his salary. At first he was troubled with debts. The uneasiness that these occasioned, led him to cast about in his mind for some mode of relief. His first decision on the subject was to ask for an advance of salary. He was in the receipt of one thousand dollars a year. Pressed hard by a man whom he owed, he was almost forced into an application for more salary. He did not think of denying himselt any of the expensive pleasures in which he indulged, as a surer measure of relief. The application was not favourably considered. Mr. Miller paid, already, as much for clerk-hire as he felt himself able to do. The salary of Gray he considered fully enough for a young man. After receiving a positive refusal on the part of his employer to grant his request, the clerk, concealing as fully as possible his disappointment, turned to the performance of his regular duties. But, there was a tempest in his bosom. Even with an increase of salary up to the amount he had asked, the difficulties that surrounded him would still have been great. The only course by which he could then have extricated himself from immediate difficulties, would have been to borrow upon the representation of an increase of salary. Now that hope had failed.

Temptations try and prove men. Where there is integrity of character, purification is the consequence of strong trials. But when a man without fixed principles gets into difficulties, especially when brought about by his own wrong conduct, he is in imminent danger. Evil counsellors are near him with specious arguments; he must not listen to them—if he does, he will almost inevitably fall into the snare laid for his unwary feet.

“Something must be done,” said the young man with compressed lips, after he had recovered a little from the confusion of mind into which Mr. Miller's positive refusal to grant his request had thrown him.

"Something *must* be done. What shall it be?"

That question gave activity to his mind. He thought, and thought, and thought for a long time. But one only hope glimmered in upon the darkness, and that was a light kindled upon a treacherous coast. It was the hope of relief from pressing demands by using, without his employer's knowledge, a portion of the money that regularly passed through his hands. The first suggestion of this to his mind, caused him an inward shudder. He looked away from it; but everything was so dark, that, for relief, he turned to it again. The idea seemed not now so revolting. He did not think of embezzling his employer's money; only borrowing it as a measure of temporary relief. Finally the tempter prevailed. A good opportunity presented itself for using as large a sum as two hundred dollars without a suspicion of the fact by Mr. Miller, and he embraced that opportunity. Pressing demands were thereby met, and a surplus left in his hands.

From this time forth a host of evil counsellors had access to his ear, and he listened to them too often. There was no reform in his habits or expenses, but rather a giving of the rein to both. He indulged more frequently in expensive pleasures, and had, in consequence, to resort oftener to the funds of his employer, which he did with less and less compunction of conscience each time.

Not many months passed before Miller found his business pressing upon him too heavily. His payments were not made with the same ease as formerly. There having been no diminution in his business, he was entirely at a loss to account for this fact. Not the slightest suspicion of the real cause passed over his mind; for his confidence in Gray was unbounded. Had he known anything of his habits, doubts of his integrity would have been awakened: but of the many facts that had come under the observation of Deal, not one had been even suspected by Miller.

Rapidly did young Gray run his downward course. His money-wants grew every day more and more urgent, and his inroads upon his employer's funds more and more steady and exhausting.

"Miller 'll be a ruined man as sure as the world, if he keeps that Gray about him," Deal would say to himself, whenever he perceived the young clerk spending money with great freedom, as he often did. But he never once thought of saying as much to the wronged merchant. He never felt it to be his duty to whisper a friendly warning in his ear.

Time passed, and the merchant's business became daily more and more involved. Not a payment was made without having to borrow money from one source or another. The cause of this he could not define; and, unfortunately, not suspecting where it really lay, he remained altogether at fault in endeavoring to counteract and resist the downward tendency of his business, until ruin was the consequence.

"It is just as I said," remarked Deal, when the news of Miller's failure reached his ear. "I knew it would be so; and I said it would be so a hundred times."

"You did?" replied the individual to whom this was addressed, looking steadily into the little man's face. He was a losing creditor of the broken merchant.

"Yes, I did."

"And, pray, what reason had you for saying so?"

"This very good reason, His principal clerk lived too fast. He kept a swift trotting horse, and indulged, to my certain knowledge, in very many other extravagancies that must have consumed money equal to four or five times his salary."

"Indeed!"

"It is a fact, sir."

"Did Miller know this?"

"Of course he did not."

"But you did."

"Yes: and I said, dozens of times, that if Miller did not look out he would be ruined."

The creditor compressed his lips tightly, and eyed the self-complacent Deal for nearly a minute, steadily.

"You knew it!—you said so!" he remarked half contemptuously, at length. "And you could see an honest man wronged daily, and at last ruined by a scoundrel, and all this time coldly stand looking on, and prophecy his downfall."

"It was no concern of mine," said Deal, his face crimsoning.

"No concern of yours! It is every man's business to warn his neighbors of approaching danger. He who does not do so, is little better than an accessory to evil. For my part, sir, I shall ever look upon you as more than half guilty of poor Miller's ruin. A word might have saved him; but you heartlessly forbore to speak. I would not have your conscience for a dozen worlds like this!"

Thus saying, with a contemptuous look and tone, he turned from the abashed Deal, and left him to his own self-accusing reflections. They were such as no true lover of his kind could ever wish to have.

There is often much of self-complacent pride in the oft repeated—"I SAID SO—" But more, we fear, of criminal neglect to warn an honest, but unsuspecting neighbor of the danger that lurks in his path. Let every one look to himself and see how far he is guilty in this respect. Few of us, I fear, will find our garments spotless.

OUR LITTLE SON.

WITHIN our quiet nest at home
We have a little son;
Five smiling years have passed away
Since his young life begun.
Five smiling years! Brief, happy time!
So fleet have moved the hours—
So light our steps—we've only seemed
To tread among the flowers.

When day declines, and evening shades
Come stealing soft and slow;
And star-rays in the dusky sky
But dimly come and go;
From care and thought and business free,
I homeward turn my feet—
Oh! how the absence is repaid
When that dear boy I meet.

I do not know that other eyes
Would linger o'er his face;
Or find on brow, or cheek, or lip
A single winning grace;
And yet, it would be strange, I own,
If other eyes could see
No beauty in his countenance,
So beautiful to me.

To us his face is loveliness—
 There sweet expressions blend;
There thoughts look upwards; and on these
 Affection's smiles attend.
A picture in our hearts he lives,
 Bound by love's golden frame;
And love has given the precious boy
 A fitly chosen name.

Oh! could we keep our darling one
 As innocent as now;
As free from lines of care and pain
 His smoothly polished brow,—
As free from evil every throb
 His joyous pulses fling;
And free each thought that upward soars
 On mind's expanding wing!

O Thou, who lovest every one—
 Whose face *their* angels see—
The children thou hast given to us,
 Hold, hold them near to Thee!
If ever, in their future years,
 Their feet aside should stray,
Oh! lead them gently back again,
 And keep them in Thy way.

BREAD IN THE WINTER NIGHT.

> "Winter days and nights may bury beneath their pall of snow the sown corn; but, when the spring arrives, it will be found equally true, that 'there grows much bread in the winter night.'"
>
> *Miss Bremer.*

YES, it is true, spiritually as well as naturally, that there grows much bread in the winter night. How better can I illustrate this than by giving a passage or two from the private history of one whose bright summer declined into sober autumn; whose autumn gave place to winter, with its brief days, its long, long nights, its cold, concealing snows; and whose dreary winter was at length succeeded by the warm and cheering spring-time. There grew much bread in her winter night!

Sunlight was upon the head and flowers along the path of Ella Linden. Her heart was too full of its own joy to feel sympathy for others. There were so many blossoms around her feet, that she could not realize the fact that others were moving wearily along rough and barren ways, uncheered by a glimpse of sunshine, and unrefreshed by the grateful odor of a single flower.

"Come, Ella," said I to her one day, "I want you to go with me to see a poor woman in trouble.

I am sure you will feel sympathy for her, and that this sympathy will inspire you with a wish to do for her some good office; and she needs all the kindness that generous hearts may feel prompted to bestow.'

"Excuse me," she returned a little coldly. "I have no taste for anything of this kind. I never like to meet people who are in trouble. If she is in want, I will give you something for her."

"She stands in no pressing need of charity. But she wants kindness and sympathy from those who can feel for her. Try and conquer your reluctance, and go with me. It will do both you and her good."

But Ella shook her head and replied:

"No, no. If you can do her any good, go and see her. But, as I said before, I have no taste for anything of this kind."

"No taste for wiping a tear from the eye of a weeping sister?"

"If you please to say so."

"You may live to feel differently, Ella."

"Then I will act differently," was her lightly-spoken reply.

Often did I thus seek to win her thoughts away from the mere pleasures of life, and awaken in her mind sympathy for others. But my words, like seed cast upon a sterile soil, showed no signs of germination. For years her life was a gay round of pleasure. Then clouds gathered over her sky, and storms broke upon her head. After the fierce war of elements had subsided, and the atmosphere became calm again, the sun shone out, but not with its wonted fervour, and his stay above the horizon was brief. It was winter. Briefer still became the days and feebler the sunshine, until over Ella's heart was thrown a snowy pall—chilling it to the centre.

There were many of her old companions and friends, who, like her, had no taste for anything but flowers and sunshine; and they turned coldly from her at the very time when she most needed their warmest sympathies.

As in the summer light of joy, so in the gloom of affliction and adversity, Ella only thought of herself. It was in vain that I tried to lift her mind above its own wretchedness, and to interest it in the work of doing something for others.

"I have trouble enough of my own; grief enough of my own," she would answer me.

"But try and forget these," I would sometimes urge her. "Stretch forth your hand and lift some burthen from an oppressed heart, and your own will feel lighter."

I spoke without effect. With her head bowed upon her bosom, Ella passed through her dreary winter. Spring at length came. The hand of sorrow and adversity that lay so heavily upon her heart, was lifted up; its pulsation became freer, and the life-blood flowed in warmer currents through her veins. Then it was apparent that, although the sown grain had been long buried beneath a pall of snow, yet much bread had grown in the winter night—many good affections had taken root in her heart, and were now shooting up their green blades in the warm sunshine.

But, to descend into plain prose. The death of Ella's mother, and the loss of property by her father, changed all from brightness into gloom. Following this, came the desertion of friend and lover. The pure waters of affection, so freely poured out, instead of flowing in a bright and fertilizing current, were frozen as they fell. The winter was long and dreary, and full of suffering. But there came, at length, a change.

Mr. Linden was a man possessing force of character and business acumen. From the wreck of his fortune he had been able to save a small remnant. This formed the basis of new operations in trade, that were successful as far as they went. Gradually there was an increase of business, and the promise of a still greater increase in the future. But still the income was small, and the style in which his family lived, exceedingly humble. Ella was the oldest of three children, and the cares of the household, since her mother's death, devolved upon her. For a long time she had no affection for the duties that were forced upon her, but entered into and performed them under the pressure of necessity.

For two years the family lived humbly and in strict retirement. A period so long gave ample time for Ella's mind to acquire a healthier tone of thinking and feeling. First, she was touched with a sense of her father's lonely condition since her mother's death, and this led her to regard him with a tender affection and to seek by every means in her power to make their home cheerful and pleasant. She thought of what his wants might be, and endeavored to supply them. If he looked gloomy, she strove, by act or word, to dispel the gloom. To her younger sisters she endeavored, more and more fully every day, after her mind had awakened to a true perception of her duties, to supply the place of their mother. As she turned, lovingly, toward them, they turned, like flowers to the sun, toward her, and reflected back, smilingly, her warm affection.

At the end of two years the coldness and gloom of winter passed fully away, and not even a snow wreath lay upon the ground. Mr. Linden's business efforts had been crowned with unexpected success, and he was able to remove his family into a larger and more comfortable dwelling. A few weeks after this change had taken place, I called to see Ella, whom I had met frequently during her dark days of affliction and trial, that had continued, until the work they were designed to effect was fully completed. I found her cheerful; I might almost say, happy. But she was not idle, nor was she thinking of and caring for herself. Her love for her father and sisters extinguished mere selfish feelings, and ever prompted her to some new effort for their comfort or happiness; and her reward was sweet.

"You remember Florence Dale?" said I to her, after we had been conversing some time.

"Oh, yes! She was one of my most intimate friends. I always liked Florence.—But with the rest, when adversity came, she grew cold toward me, and seemed to forget that I even lived."

"Poor Florence!" said I. "Her days of sunshine have departed. Her father died some time ago, and to-day I hear that he died insolvent. Already his widow and children have been compelled to remove from their luxurious home and are sinking down into obscurity, and I fear privation if not want."

"Poor Florence!" ejaculated Ella, tears filling her eyes. "I will see her, for I know that I can speak words of comfort and hope. Have you seen her?"

"No, not yet," I replied.

"Shall we not go together?"

"Yes, if you like."

"Let us go now," said the sympathizing girl, earnestly, while her face was lit up with a glow ot unselfish affection. "Few will follow her in her sad exile from old associations and friends; and there will be few, if any, to lift her bowed head, or speak a word of comfort. I have passed through it all, and I know what it is."

Half an hour afterward we stood at the door of a small dwelling. There were few appearances of comfort about it, and nothing of elegance. We were admitted by a small colored girl, the only domestic as we afterwards learned. Ella asked for Florence, and sent up both her own name and mine. In about ten minutes Florence appeared, and received us with distant formality. There was something cold and repulsive in her manner, as if she regarded us not as friends, but as those who felt a real pleasure in witnessing her downfall, and had come to ascertain how really low it was.—Ella did not seem to perceive this, but grasped the young girl's hand warmly, and said—

"It's a pleasure for me to meet with you, Florence, and to hold your hand in mine once more; though I cannot but wish that it were under different circumstances. It is less than an hour since I heard of the affliction you have been called to endure, and I have come to ask the privilege of renewing the friendly relations that once existed between us—for I have been in the deep waters through which you are now passing. I have suffered all that you are now suffering, and can therefore enter into your heart and feel with you."

Florence looked into the face of Ella, as she thus spoke, her countenance still cold, and her manner repellant.

"Let us be friends, as of old, Florence.—Old friends are the best friends."

I saw the young girl's lips begin to quiver. Ella still held her hand and looked earnestly into her face. A moment passed, and then Florence sunk, sobbing, upon the breast of Ella.

"Bread in the winter night," I could not help murmuring, as I thought of Miss Bremer's beautiful allusion to the growth of good affections in the winter of adversity and affliction.

Long and earnest was the conversation that passed between Ella and Florence, after the latter grew calm. I had tried to speak many words of assurance and comfort to Ella in *her* winter night, but now I felt how cold they were, and wondered not that they had glanced back from her heart like sunbeams from an icy rock. *She* spoke from a deeply realizing sense of what her friend was suffering; *I* merely uttered cold truths from my understanding. I never saw the face of Ella so beautiful as while she strove, with a loving spirit, to fill the mind of her young friend with hope in the future, through the means of duties earnestly done in the present.

"Come and see me again, won't you?"—said Florence, as she stood, with tears in her eyes, almost clinging to the hand of Ella. We were about departing.

"Yes, frequently; and you must not fail to return my visit. It will do us both good to meet often."

And they did meet often. Ella always saying something to give strength to the mind of her young friend, or to sustain it with hope. The circumstances of Mrs. Dale were much straightened, and she had no income. In her own grief at the death of her father, and in her own sufferings, Florence had forgotten that to her mother's sorrow was added a heavy burden of care; nor did she think of it until prompted by Ella, who suggested whether it were not in her power to lighten this burden.

"What can I do, Ella, to lighten it!" she asked.

"Your mother has no income?"

"None at all."

"And but a small remnant of money from your father's estate?"

"Only a few hundred dollars."

"Which will soon be exhausted. Now, is it not in your power to lift from her heart a mountain weight by using a talent that you possess, and thereby earning something toward the support of the family? I know of no one more capable of giving music lessons than you are."

The face of Florence crimsoned over instantly.

"You cannot be in earnest!" said she, in a tone of surprise—almost displeasure.

"Why not?" Ella asked, mildly. "Is there any thing wrong in what I suggest?"

"Me become a music teacher!"

"Deeply thankful should you be, my dear friend," Ella replied with much seriousness, "that you have the ability to render your mother most important aid in the support of a large family. To be useful, Florence, is, in reality, the highest honor to which any one can attain. Think of your mother's position. Think of your younger brothers and sisters, who need to be sustained and educated, and I am sure love will prompt you to seek eagerly for some means by which you can aid your mother and help to support and educate them. You need not seek far. The means are in your hands."

For a time Florence could not bear to think of what Ella proposed. But gradually her mind gained strength and her preceptions became clearer. She not only saw, but felt, that her friend was right. To seek employment as a music teacher, and to enter upon the duties she had voluntarily taken upon herself, was a great trial to Florence. But the high end she had in view sustained her. Instead of feeling humbled in her new vocation after she had entered upon it, her mind was elevated and sustained by a calm, ever, abiding consciousness that she was doing what was right. The noble, unselfish spirit of Florence, gave new life to her mother's heart, and shot a ray of light across her sky, where all had been darkness.

All this I noticed with pleasure. I saw how, in reverses and affliction, the mind is opened more interiorly and filled with better affections and truer sympathies, and I understood more clearly than I had ever done before, the meaning of the sentiment —"There grows much bread in the winter night."

Time did its appropriate work for both Ella and Florence. A few years have passed since their winter days and nights. All that need be said of them is, that both are happier and more useful than they were before, or could possibly have been without affliction. There grew much bread in their winter night.

TO A CHILD WITH A DOVE.

Dear child! May dove-like innocence
  Fold its light wings to rest—
As now the bird thou lovest well,
  Upon thy gentle breast,
Fold its light wings, and in thy heart
  Build for itself a nest.

Oh, beautiful is innocence!
  In all its forms we see
A grace that charms, a loveliness,
  A heavenly purity,—
Come, gentle Eden wanderer!
  Oh, come and dwell with me!

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

I WAS reading on the subject of heavenly joy, when I came across this passage: "It was observed, that when I wished to transfer all my delight into another, a more interior and fuller delight than the former continually flowed in in its place, and the more I wished this, the more it flowed in; and it was perceived that this was from the Lord."

I was so struck with the passage, that I could read no further, but closed the book and let my mind dwell upon it.

While pondering the subject, it seemed to me a fitting one for illustration. I therefore turned it over and over in my mind, and endeavored to get it into such a form as would be easily comprehended, and at the same time be most interesting.

I took up the book, and read the passage over again. Let me repeat it. "It was observed, that when I wished to transfer all my delight into another, a more interior and fuller delight than the former continually flowed in, in its place, and the more I wished this, the more it flowed in; and it was perceived that this was from the Lord."

I was still more affected by what I read, and saw how in it lay the wole secret of true happiness, as well as for men on earth as for angels in heaven; and as well for children as for men and women.

A certain writer has said that we understand clearly only what we have *lived.* There is a great deal of truth in the saying,—What we *live* through we *feel*, and what we *feel* we understand.

But if we are only to comprehend this, or any other precept, after we have lived through it, we may have to wait for years. Perhaps nearly the whole of our lives. But it is of the first importance to comprehend it now, and I am going to endeavor to make it clear to the perceptions.

In order to this, by the aid of that wonderful faculty called imagination, I will compose briefly the history of a life in which this truth was perceived by actual experience; and, while the reader follows me, likewise by the aid of imagination, he will in imagination, as it were live through, or by, this truth and thus, from *living it*, comprehend it.

There was a man who, for many years, devoted himself to business and gathered together a great deal of money. Like all of us, this rich man was selfish—more selfish than some men, and not so selfish as other men. But there was enough of selfishness in his heart to make him at times, very unhappy, and to prevent his enjoying the many earthly blessings that were around him as much as he might otherwise have done.

We have often been told, and it is a truth which we should lay up in our hearts, that selfish feelings produce unhappiness; and if each one will examine himself on this subject, he will find that it is so. When is our delight the greatest? When we are seeking to enjoy some good thing alone? Or when we are sharing our pleasure with others? If our own heart is full of joy, let us seek to impart that joy to another, and then a deeper joy will flow in to take the place of that which has gone forth to bless another. The heavenly delight of doing good, is continually pressing into human hearts from the spiritual world; and if we let it flow forth to others, then we become mediums of good to others, while our own hearts are continually experiencing new delight from the higher good which takes the place of that which we have let pass to those around us. But if, in a spirit of selfishness, we hold fast to the good which the Lord has given us, and thus refuse to be medium of good to others, our own blessings, like pure water from long stagnation, lose their heavenly quality and turn to disquietude or pain.

But the rich man to whom we have referred, did not understand this. He was not aware of the fact, that to truly enjoy the good things we have, we must seek, by means of them, to benefit others—that we must let our delight flow forth, in order that a fuller and more interior delight may flow in. He had gained wealth by means of active exertions in business, and he called that wealth his own; and believed that he had a right to use it exclusively for his own enjoyment.

So the rich man built himself a large house, around which beautiful grounds were laid out—there was a park, and lawns and gardens. In the park were beautiful deer, and swans floated gracefully on the artificial lake in the midst of his park. The softest green grass covered the even lawns, and the gardens were filled with the choicest flowers.

While this elegant house was building, and these beautiful grounds and gardens were in preparation, the rich man looked forward to the time of their completion as a period when he would have obtained about all the happiness in this world that his heart desired.

But when all was ready, and he took possession of his luxurious mansion, he was no happier than before. Nay, he was not so happy; for having anticipated a great deal, he felt the pain of disappointment.

He walked round and round his palace of a house, and noted its architectural beauty—that external beauty which he had provided as a means of happiness—but his heart did not bound lightly and joyfully. He walked through his elegant park—he gazed at the pleasant lawn—he lingered among the flowers and shrubbery of his garden, where was everything to delight the senses—and then, weary in mind and dissatisfied, he could not tell why, would go back into his house, and sitting down among the costly and elegant furniture he had provided as another means of happiness, but which now he did not even notice, pass hours in a state of mind that was near akin to wretchedness.

Can you not understand the reason of this, from what has been said! Do not your minds now refer to what we quoted at the beginning, with a better apprehension of its meaning? There was no wish on the part of the rich man to transfer all his delight to another, and, therefore, a more "interior and fuller delight" could not flow into his mind from the Lord. Selfishly he strove to keep all the pleasure that came to him as a good gift from above, and, as we remarked before, like water in a close vessel, it stagnated and became impure. Thus good was changed into evil—happiness into misery.

Weeks and months went by. It did not become any better with the rich man, but rather worse. To this point in his life he had looked for years. Here he was to rest from the severe labor he had endured in order to lay up wealth and be happy. But now, when he had done everything in his power to secure contentment, that smiling guest, to grace his dwelling, she turned away and left him, faint and weary at heart, and wondering why she would not tarry in his princely abode.

By the end of a year, this rich man was so discontented that he began seriously to think of leaving his elegant estate, where was everything to delight the senses, and see if he could not, by travelling in foreign countries, find something to interest his mind, weary with itself and everything around him.

One day while riding along, a short distance from home, he saw a gray-headed man at work on the public road, breaking stone. It was in the summer season, and the sun shone down hot upon him. He looked faint and weary. In passing, the image of the poor old man fixed itself in his mind; and, as he rode along, pity awoke the desire to do him good. So he turned back and asked the old man a good many questions. He learned that his wife and two young grand-children were dependent on him for support; and that in consequence of a long spell of sickness, he had been turned away from a small farm, in tilling which he had been able to make a comfortable support.

"You find this very hard work," said the rich man.

"Yes, very hard," replied the old laborer, wiping the sweat from his wrinkled face; "very hard for one who is turned of sixty."

The rich man asked him his name and where he lived, and then rode on. But he did not forget him. Pity made him resolve to do what for him was an easy task—give him a helping hand. And the moment this resolution was formed, he felt happier than he had felt for a long time. Do you know the reason? I will tell you. There had come a wish to transfer a part of the good he had received to another, and the very wish relieved his mind of the pressure of selfish affections, and opened to it an influx of heavenly delight—which is the delight of doing good—from the Lord.

Not in a mere kind resolution did the rich man rest. On that very day he made inquiries about the poor man, and learned that he was honest and industrious, but had been reduced to his low estate by sickness. So he went to the person who owned the place from which he had been turned away, and finding that it was still untenanted, paid the arrears of rent and hired it for another season on his own responsibility. Then he rode back to the place where was at work, in the hot sunshine, the old man, and said to him—

"My friend, you are too old and feeble for toil like this. Would you not like to return again to the little farm you have left?"

There was a meaning in his tone of voice, as well as in the question he asked, that made the poor old man's heart tremble. He looked up earnestly, but did not answer.

"I have paid the rent, and the farm is your's again," said his benefactor.

The stone hammer that was in the old man's hand fell to the ground. But still he did not utter a word in reply. His heart was so full that he could not speak.

"And here," continued the rich man, "is a little money to help you begin the world again; and should you become sick, and get into trouble as before, send me word, and I will come and help you."

Such unexpected good news completely overcame the poor old man. He tried to express his gratitude, but words he had none; yet his quivering lips and tearful eye showed the nature of his feelings. Ere he could utter what was in his heart, the rich man turned his horse's head and rode quickly away.

It is hard to say which felt happiest, the rich man or the poor man—the giver or the receiver.

All the wealth of the rich man, though used with the utmost freedom, for purposes of self-gratification, had failed to bring happiness. He had expended thousands and thousands of dollars for this end alone, and yet it was not gained. But with less than a hundred dollars, used for the purpose of doing good to another, from an unselfish motive, he had gained the blessing so earnestly sought. The dove of peace came to him unexpectedly, and for a time folded its wings and rested in his bosom.

Need I explain the reason of this? True heavenly delight had flowed into the unselfish purpose of his mind. In doing good to another, from a sincere desire to serve him, he was acting from a heavenly principle, and this brought heaven near to him.

This explanation did not come into the rich man's mind; he pondered the subject, and rather wondered that he should feel so happy at the thought of doing an act of kindness to a poor old laborer, that cost him so small a sacrifice and little or no effort.

Having once enjoyed the pleasures of benevolence, the rich man was attracted further along the way he had entered. He had plenty of time to look around him for objects of benevolence, and plenty of money with which to do good, if he cared to spend it in seeking to make others happy.

One day he went to visit the old man—he always experienced a feeling of pleasure when he thought of him—to see how he was getting along. He found him busy at work in his garden, while his two grand-children were playing among the flowers.

"These little fellows ought to be at school," said he.

"True," replied their grandfather, "but there is no school in the neighborhood; and if there was, I have no money to pay the teacher."

"No school!" said the rich man, with surprise, "that's bad! We ought to have a school here; unless children are educated, they cannot make useful men and women."

"It's very true, sir," replied the old man;

"there are twenty or thirty children idling about in this neighborhood, and growing up in ignorance. But their fathers are poor and not able to pay a teacher."

"This must not be," said the rich man, as he walked homeward. "If the poor people about here are not able to pay a teacher, I am."

So he opened a school for the poor children and bore all the expense himself. At first his selfish feelings held him back, but, after a struggle with them, his good purposes overcame.

Still happier now, was the rich man. He had again transferred a portion of his good things to others, and in doing so, a more interior delight had flowed into him from the Lord.

"What is the pleasure of possession to this?" he said to himself, as he reflected upon the inward delights he was experiencing. "It is pain in comparison. If the spending of a few hundred dollars in doing good to others, bring me so great a pleasure, how much enjoyment have I in reserve, for God has blessed me with an abundance of wealth."

Next the rich man employed himself in assisting by various means, the humble peasantry around him. To some he gave good advice—others he aided with money—to each and all he imparted of his own surplus, as they had need. It was not long before on every hand appeared some evidence of his kind deeds. Wherever he went, grateful looks and words came to his eyes and ears. He felt a new pleasure in life. In regarding others, and in seeking to transfer to them a portion of the good he had received, there had been a continual influx of delight into his spirit from the Lord. And now, his elegant mansion began to look more attractive in his eyes than it had ever looked before. There was a beauty, now seen and enjoyed, in garden, field and grove. In every object of taste which he had provided as a source of pleasure, real charms were perceived. The rich man no longer thought of going abroad for enjoyment. He had around him all that his heart desired. He was happy, because, in seeking to do good to others, he had turned himself towards the Lord, from whom alone can be received the ability to enjoy the good things of life so freely bestowed upon all.

If, then, we would be happy, we must seek to make others happy. In no other way can this great blessing be obtained. If we try to keep our pleasures for ourselves alone, they will lose their virtue, and turn to discontent; but, if we let our delight flow forth to others, the Lord will send into our hearts a purer joy. And when this, too, flows forth, a still deeper and purer delight will come in and take its place. And thus will it ever be, until we rise into the ineffable joy of the angels.

A THOUGHT.

BESIDE a pleasant streamlet,
I sat me down one day,
And gazed upon the waters
That gently moved away.—
The bending flower, the beetling rock,
The tree of giant limb,
Through which the glorious light of heaven
Came solemnly and dim:
The blue o'erarching firmament
With its thousand cloudy isles;
The sun whose beams come down to us
Like God our Father's, smiles—
These, all upon its bosom
Were pictured to the eye,
While the waters of that streamlet,
Went gliding gently by.

Oh, be my life like that pure stream,
That moves in light and shade,
With the beautiful of earth and sky
All pictured there, I said,—
And may no dark pollution,
No stain of sin be given,
But my spirit pass, like that pure stream,
All spotless on—to heaven.

A DOMESTIC SCENE.

"You look serious this evening, Henry," said Mrs. Trueman, in a voice of tender interest, as she came up and stood by her husband, laying her hand upon him as she spoke.

"Do I?" he replied, half evasively, and with a smile meant to be an indifferent one. But Edith knew her husband's face too well to be deceived in its expression.

"You certainly do," she said; "and more than that, I don't think you have been as cheerful as you are usually, for several days."

Trueman's eyes fell to the floor, and he remained silent. He continued so only for a short time; then he looked up steadily into his wife's face, and said,

"Edith, I do feel serious, and have felt so for several days. Our family is large. Five children to provide for and to educate, taxes me heavily. Business is dull: for the last three weeks I haven't cleared the rent of my store. If there is not some change for the better, I do not see what will be the consequence."

"It is a dull season," Edith remarked.

"True."

"Are any of your neighbors doing much better?"

"Very few, I believe."

"Of course business will revive again."

"Yes."

"Then why feel dispirited, Henry?"

"I can't help it, somehow or other. The fact is, I don't seem to be getting along in the world. It has been hand to mouth, as they say, ever since we were married."

"And the hand has always had a full supply for the mouth," was the smiling reply.

"I know it; but suppose I were to be taken down sick—suppose anything should happen to me—the family could not possibly hold together."

"But you are not sick: nothing has happened to you yet. Why take trouble on interest? Have you forgotten to put your trust in Him who feedeth the ravens?"

"I forget Him too often, Edith," Trueman replied, looking into his wife's face steadily. "Thankful am I that He has given me one who can recall my thoughts back to their stay in trouble. He will not forsake us—I know that He will not, even though we are called upon to pass through the fire; but weak nature shrinks away; it fears to encounter every purifying ordeal, even while conscious that it is for good."

"Why anticipate, at this particular time, any new ordeal?"

"A dark cloud gathering in the sky portends a storm."

"Many, very many; and from some have fallen upon us fierce tempests."

"Many a cloud comes up from the horizon with threatening aspect, in whose bosom no lightning lies concealed, from which descends no rain. Have not many such clouds swept harmlessly over our sky?"

"Purifying our atmosphere, and giving us, on the morrow, a brighter sun."

"Yet sometimes marking their way with desolation. Our hearts bear some scars."

Edith was silent. Life had not been to them all sunshine—it had not passed on smoothly as a boat upon a summer sea. Her own duties had been arduous, and her trials severe. She had borne eight children, and three of them slept in the grave. These afflictions were, to her, very grievous, for she loved her children; it was touching the very apple of her eye to touch them. But in each dark night of sorrow her glance had been steadily upward. She had suffered, and she had likewise been blessed—doubly blessed, it sometimes seemed to her. Her voice was slightly tremulous, as after a long pause, she said,

"They are deep scars, Henry; but can either of us now say, from the heart, as we look back upon life, that we would rather not have been wounded as we were?"

It was some moments before Trueman replied; his eyes were turned inward during the time. At length, speaking with a sudden warmth of manner, he said,

"No, Edith, no! I do not regret a single care nor sorrow that is past. All have been for our good. We are really happier in consequence of them."

"And will be, in consequence of all that may come."

"Yes, I believe it."

"Then let us not be troubled in our minds. Let us not distrust His goodness whose love is unbounded. He will bring all out right in the end."

Just at that moment the keys of a piano in the adjoining room were touched lightly and skilfully. Then a soft sweet voice sung Mrs. Hemans' beautiful "Evening Song of the Tyrolese Peasants."

"Come to the sunset tree!
  The day is past and gone;
The woodman's axe lies free,
  And the reaper's work is done.

The twilight star to heaven,
  And the summer dew to flowers,
And rest to us is given
  By the cool soft evening hours.

Sweet is the hour of rest!
  Pleasant the wind's low sigh,
And the gleaming of the west,
  And the turf whereon we lie.

When the burden and the heat
  Of labour's task are o'er,
And kindly voices greet
  The tired one at his door.

Come to the sunset tree!
  The day is past and gone;
The woodman's axe lies free,
  And the reaper's work is done.

Yes; tuneful is the sound
  That dwells in whispering boughs,
Welcome the freshness round,
  And the gale that fans our brows.

But rest more sweet and still
  Than ever nightfall gave,
Our longing hearts shall fill
  In the world beyond the grave.

There shall no tempest blow,
  No scorching noon-tide beat,
There shall be no more snow,
  No weary wandering feet.

And we lift our trusting eyes,
  From the hills our fathers trod,
To the quiet of the skies,
  To the Sabbath of our God.

Come to the sunset tree!
  The day is past and gone;
The woodman's axe lies free,
  And the reaper's work is done."

It was the voice of their own child that warbled low and distinctly the sweet air and soothing words of this song—their Edith—now just at the tender age of fourteen. She was more beautiful than her mother had been, whose virtues were reproduced in her child, with added lustre. Towards her parents she had ever exhibited the most devoted love. Gentle, wise above her years, discreet, and firm, she had truly been an elder sister to her younger brothers and sisters, all of whom loved her, and were ever willing to submit to her their little difficulties, and abide her arbitration. To tell how much her father loved her would be impossible. She was his idol. No sound was to him so sweet as the sound of her voice, singing some simple ballad, or lingering on some soothing air.

Like oil poured upon troubled waters were words, voice, and melody to his feelings. He listened with rapt attention to every word, every peculiar grace in the air, every variation of affection in her voice. When the last sound died upon his ear, he looked up, and smiling in the face of his wife, said,

"Did you ever hear anything sweeter than that? It was the very soul of music that breathed from her lips."

"It is very sweet," returned the mother. "Edith is a treasure that cannot be valued. If ever parents were blessed in a child, we are blessed in her."

The door opened, and Edith entered. She was tall, slender, and graceful, yet simple in her manner. She walked up to where her mother stood, with her hand still resting upon her husband, and, crowding in between them and the window, half reclined against her father, with an air of childlike affection. Trueman laid his hand fondly upon her head, and gently smoothed her hair, at the same time that he pressed his lips to her cheek.

No word was spoken for many minutes. The group remained as motionless during the time as if under the eye of a painter; but each heart was beating high with pure and happy feelings. From the father's mind all anxious care had fled. He loved his family. Each member had a place in his heart, and that place was kept sacred.

"You sung that evening song just at the right moment, Edith." This was said by her father, after she had stood by his side for several minutes. "You knew I was sitting here?"

"Yes."

"And sung for me my favourite air?"

"Yes: it was for your ears, father."

"Thank you, dear. My mind was not as calm as usual; but that song, and your voice, have tranquillized my spirits. I am Saul, and you are to me as David."

"No, no, father; I cannot admit that comparison to be true," Edith replied, taking hold of his hand and gently pressing it. The twilight had deepened into obscurity, and hidden each face from the other's eyes. "You are not Saul, possessed of an evil spirit. Oh no, no!"

"Distrust of Providence is an evil spirit, my child."

"But you cannot distrust a kind Providence. My father knows Who it is that governs all things in wisdom." This was said with something of surprise, that her father, who had so carefully taught her to believe in the unfailing goodness and wisdom of God, should himself feel distrust.

"It is not always, my child," he replied, "that we can keep, while subjected to this world's trials and disappointments, our minds evenly balanced, our confidence unwavering. But He who sees, loves, and pities us, ever provides antidotes for these states. We are not suffered to remain long under the cloud. To me your voice alone, as you sung some favourite song, has many a time dispelled the gloom that has settled on my mind—has chased away the evil spirit."

"How glad I am that the voice given me is pleasant to my father's ear. But hark! little Charley is crying; I must run and see what ails him."

And away she sprang from the room. The sound of little Charley's voice—he was the youngest child—had suddenly arisen from a chamber above. It was still almost in a moment after Edith's step was heard at the door of his room. Her father's troubled spirit was not the only one that grew tranquil under the sound of her voice. There was not one in the house who did not feel its magical influence.

"If we had no other blessing, we would still be richly dowered," the father remarked, as soon as the voice of little Charley was hushed.

"Yes; but we have, besides her, many good things. If ever disposed to repine or murmur, we are much to blame."

"To that I freely assent. But sometimes, Edith, weak, ignorant, shortsighted human nature cannot see beyond a very narrow circle. We look ahead, and our pathway bends suddenly out of sight. There is a high mountain before us, with black clouds mantling its summit. Is it any wonder that sometimes the heart will fail?"

"Perhaps not," was replied. "But let us not fix our minds too steadily upon the mountain barrier and its mysterious threatening clouds, but think of the many quiet paths that have opened to us, and wound pleasantly along by cooling stream and smiling meadow, when we had trembled at the sight of a rugged acclivity, and shrunk from attempting the ascent. 'As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.' While that blessed promise remains, what have we to fear? Nothing, certainly, that this world can threaten. If we have to climb a steep ascent, strength to do so will be given; if to pass through a dark, gloomy valley, a light from some star will fall upon our path, and show us clearly the way in which it is safe to tread."

THE DEPARTED ONE.

WRITTEN FOR FRIENDS IN AFFLICTION.

One bird had flown; one flower was dead;
  One leaf had left our tree;
One Heaven-sent blessing had gone back
  To vast Eternity:
One babe, kind Father of us all!
  Had passed by death, to Thee.

Ah! none may know how deep our grief;
  E'en yet some lines remain,
Tear-worn upon our hearts, the sad
  Mementos of our pain.
It seem'd that joy had fled away,
  And would not come again.

But other birds came to our nest,
  And other blossoms hung
Around us, while their fragrant breath
  On all the air was flung—
Though one was lost, yet, to our hearts
  How many children clung!

We bless'd the Giver! Yet our hearts
Were anxious while we bless'd:
One loss of danger warn'd, and made
Us fearful for the rest;—
Thus, in our very thankfulness,
Our bosoms were oppress'd.

And there was one—our fair-hair'd boy—
With blue eyes, mild as even,
That turn'd, as if his home were there,
So often towards heaven—
Oh! how we feared lest God would take
This treasure he had given.

Not idle phantoms were our fears,—
A messenger was sent,
To carry back the angel-boy
That Heaven to us had lent:
Ah! when the summons came, how grief
Our very heart strings rent!

Could tears or prayers have held him here,
He had not pass'd away:
Could love have bound him to the earth,
He had been ours to-day:
But tears, and prayers, and love were vain
The messenger to stay.

'Tis past! The anguish of that hour,
  Oh! let it not remain,
So heavy on the weeping heart,
  And on the throbbing brain!
'Tis past! And now we would not call
  Our lost one back again.

Though wearily the day goes by,
  And tearful falls the night,
And when the morning comes again
  We do not bless the light;
Though change, nor thought, nor earnest prayer,
  Brings back our lost delight;

Still, on this darkness of our grief
  There shines a distant star;
And Heaven's own lustre makes it bright,
  E'en though it shines afar—
Our gentle, precious, loving one,
  Is where the angels are.

Pain never more will shade his brow,
  Nor tears his sweet blue eyes;
Nor grief the pure and loving lips,
  Whose musical replies,
Are falling soft on memory's ear,
  Like dear words from the skies.

Our Father! who, in tender love,
  Hath taken from our care,
One whom our weak hearts loved too much,
  Regard our tearful prayer—
This loss—such wond'rous gain to him—
  O, give us strength to bear!

GOING TO HEAVEN.

Whatever our gifts may be, the love of imparting them for the good of others brings Heaven into the soul.—*Mrs. Child.*

An old man, with a peaceful countenance, sat in a company of twelve persons. They were conversing, but he was silent. The theme upon which they were discoursing was Heaven, and each one who spoke did so with animation.

"Heaven is a place of rest," said one—"rest and peace. Oh! what sweet words! rest and peace. Here, all is labor and disquietude. There we shall have rest and peace."

"And freedom from pain," said another, whose pale cheeks and sunken eyes told many a tale of bodily suffering. "No more pain; no more sickness! The aching head will be at rest—the weary limbs find everlasting repose."

"Sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away," thus spoke a third one of the company. "No more grief, no more anguish of spirit. Happy, happy change!"

"There," added a fourth, "the wounded spirit, that none can bear, is healed. The reed long bruised and bent by the tempests of life, finds a smiling sky, and a warm, refreshing and healing sunshine. Oh! how my soul pants to escape from this world, and like a bird fleeing to the mountains, get home again from its dreary exile."

Thus, one after another spoke, and each one regarded Heaven as a place of happiness into which he was to come after death; but the old man still sat silent, and his eyes were bent thoughtfully upon the floor. Presently one said,

"Our aged friend says nothing. Has he no hope of Heaven? Does he not rejoice with us in the happy prospect of getting there, when the silver cord shall be loosened, and the golden bowl broken at the fountain?"

The old man, thus addressed, looked around upon his companions. His face remained serene, and his eyes had a heavenly expression.

"Have you not a blessed hope of Heaven? Does not your heart grow warm with sweet anticipations?" continued the last speaker.

"I never think much about going to Heaven," the old man said, in a mild, quiet tone.

"Never think of going to Heaven!" exclaimed one of the most ardent of the company, his voice warming with indignation. "Are you a Heathen?"

"I am one who is patiently striving to fill his allotted place in life," replied the old man, as calmly as before.

"And have you no hopes beyond the grave?" asked the last speaker.

"If I live right here, all will be right there." The old man pointed upward. "I have no anxieties about the future—no impatience—no ardent longings 'to pass away and be at rest' as some of you have said. I already enjoy as much of heaven as I am prepared to enjoy, and this is all that I can expect throughout eternity. You all, my friends, seem to think that men come into heaven when they die. You look ahead to death with pleasure, because then you think you will enter the happy state you anticipate—or rather the *place;* for it is clear you regard heaven as a place full of delights, into which you are to come after this mortal shall have put on immortality. But in this you are mistaken. If you do not enter heaven before you die, you will never do so afterward. If heaven be not formed within you, you will never find it out of you—you will never *come into it.*"

These remarks offended some of the company, and they spoke harshly to the old man, who made no reply, but arose and retired, with a sorrowful expression on his face. He went forth and resumed his daily occupations, and pursued them diligently. Those who had been assembled with him, also went forth—one to his farm, another to his merchandize, each one forgetting all that he had thought about heaven and its felicities, and only anxious to serve natural life and get gain. Heaven was above the world to them; and, therefore, while in the world, they could only act upon the principles that governed in the world; and prepare for heaven by pious acts on the Sabbath. There was no other way for them to do, they believed. To attempt to bring religion down into life would only, in their estimation, be to desecrate it, and expose it to ridicule and contempt.

The old man, to whom allusion has been made, kept a store for the sale of various useful articles. Those of the pious company who needed these articles as commodities of trade, or for their own use, bought of him, because they believed he would sell them only what was of good quality. One of the most ardent of these came into the old man's store one day, holding a small package in his hand; his eye was restless, his lip compressed, and he seemed struggling to keep down a feeling of excitement.

"Look at that," said he, speaking with some sternness, as he threw the package on the old man's counter.

The package was taken up, opened, and examined.

"Well?" said the old man, after he had made the examination, looking up with a steady eye and a calm expression of countenance.

"Well? Don't you see what is the matter?"

"I see that this article is a damaged one," was replied.

"And yet you sold it to me for good." The tone in which this was said implied a belief that there had been an intention of wrong.

A flush warmed the pale cheek of the old man at this remark. He examined the sample before him more carefully, and then opened a barrel of the same commodity and compared its contents with the sample. They agreed. The sample from which he had bought and by which he had sold was next examined—this was in good condition and of the best quality. "Are you satisfied?" asked the visiter, with an air of triumph.

"Of what?" the old man asked.

"That you sold me a bad article for a good one."

"Intentionally?"

"You are the best judge. That lies with God and your own conscience."

"Be kind enough to return every barrel you purchased of me and get your money."

There was a rebuke in the way this was said, which was keenly felt. An effort was made to soften the aspersion tacitly cast upon the old man's integrity, but it was received without notice.

In due time the damaged article was brought back, and the money which had been paid for it returned.

"You will not lose, I hope?" said the merchant, with affected sympathy.

"I shall lose what I paid for the article."

"Why not return it, as I have done?"

"The man from whom I purchased is neither honest nor responsible, as I have recently learned. He left the city last week in no very creditable manner, and no one expects to see him back again."

"That is hard; but I really don't think you ought to lose."

"The article is not merchantable. Loss is, therefore, inevitable."

"You can, of course, sell at some price."

"Would it be right to sell, at any price, an article known to be useless—nay, worse than useless, positively injurious to any who might use it?"

"If one should see proper to buy from you the whole lot, knowing that it was injured, you would certainly sell. For instance, if I were to offer you two cents a pound for what I bought from you for six cents, would you not take me at my offer?"

"Will you buy at that price?"

"Yes. I will give you two cents."

"What would you do with it!"

"Sell it again. What did you suppose I would do with it? Throw it in the street?"

"To whom would you sell?"

"I'd find a purchaser."

The inquiries of the old man created a suspicion that he wished to know who was to be the second purchaser, in order that he might go to him and get a better price than was offered. This was the cause of the brief answers given to his questions. He clearly comprehended what was passing in the other's mind, but took no notice of it.

"For what purpose would the individual who purchased from you buy?" he pursued.

"To sell again."

"At a further advance, of course?"

"Certainly."

"And to some one, in all probability, who would be deceived into purchasing a worthless article."

"As likely as not; but with that I have no concern. I sell it for what it is, and ask only what it is worth."

"Is it worth anything?"

"Why—yes—I can't say—no." The first words were uttered with hesitation; the last one with a decided emphasis. "But then it has a market value, as every article has."

"I cannot sell it to you, my friend," said the old man, firmly.

"Why not? I am sure you can't do better."

"I am not willing to become a party in wronging my neighbors. That is the reason. The article has no real value, and it would be wrong for me to take even a farthing per pound for it. You might sell it at an advance, and the purchaser from you at a still further advance, but some one would be cheated in the end, for the article never could be used."

"But the loss would be divided. It isn't right that one man should bear all. In the end it would be distributed amongst a good many, and the loss fall lightly upon each."

The good old man shook his head. "My friend," said he, laying his hand gently upon the other's arm—"Not very long since I heard you indulging the most ardent anticipations of heaven. You expected to get there one of these days. Is it by acts of over-reaching your neighbor that you expect to merit Heaven? Will becoming a party to wrong make you more fitted for the company of angels who seek the good of others, and love others more than themselves? I fear you are deceiving yourself. All who come into Heaven love God; and I would ask, with one of the Apostles. 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' You have much yet to learn, my friend. Of that true religion, by by which Heaven is formed in man, you have not yet learned the simplest rudiments."

There was a calm earnestness in the manner of the old man, and an impressiveness in the tone of his voice, that completely subdued his auditor, who felt rebuked and humbled, and went away more serious than he had come. But though serious, his mind was not free from anger; his self-love had been too deeply wounded.

After he had gone away, the property about which so much has been said, was taken and destroyed as privately as it could be done. The fact, however, could not be concealed. A friend of a different order from the one last introduced, inquired of the old man why he had done this. His answer was as follows.

"No man should live for himself alone. Each one should regard the common good, and act with a view to the same. If all were to do so, you can easily see that we should have Heaven upon earth, from whence, alas! it has been almost entirely banished. Our various employments are means whereby we can serve others—our individual good being a natural consequence. If the merchant sent out his ships to distant ports to obtain the useful commodities of other countries, in order to benefit his fellow citizens, do you not see that he would be far happier when his ships came in, laden with rich produce, than if he had sought only gain for himself? And do you not also see that he would obtain for himself equal, if not greater advantages? If the builder had in view the comfort and convenience of his neighbors while constructing a house, instead of regarding only the money he was to receive for his work, he would not only perform that work more faithfully, and add to the common stock of happiness, but would lay up for himself a source of perennial satisfaction. He would not, after receiving the reward of his labor in a just return of this world's goods, lose all interest in the result of that labor; but would, instead, have a deep feeling of interior pleasure whenever he looked at a human habitation erected by his hands, arising from a consciousness that his skill had enabled him to add to the common good. The tillers of the soil, the manufacturers of its products into useful articles, the artizans of every class, the literary and professional men, all would, if moved by a regard for the whole social body, not only act more efficiently in their callings, but would derive therefrom a delight now unimagined except by a very few. Believing thus, I could not be so blind as not to see that the only right course for me to pursue, was to destroy a worthless and injurious commodity, rather than sell it at any price to one who would, for gain, either himself defraud his neighbor, or aid another in doing it. The article was not only useless, it was worse than useless. How then could I, with a clear conscience sell it? No—no, my friend. I am not afraid of poverty; I am not afraid of any worldly ill—but I am afraid of doing wrong to my neighbors, or of putting it in the power of any one else to do wrong. As I have said before, if every man were to look to the good of the whole, instead of turning all his thoughts in upon himself, his own interests would be better served, and he would be far happier.

"This is a beautiful theory," remarked the friend, "but it never can be realized in actual life. Men are too selfish. They would find no pleasure in contemplating the enjoyments of others, but would rather be envious of others' good. The merchant, so little does he care for the common welfare, that unless he receive the gain of his adventures, he will let his goods perish in the warehouse;—to distribute them, even to the suffering, would not make him happier. And so with the product of labor in all the various grades of society. Men turn their eyes inward upon the little world of self, instead of outward upon the great social world. Few, if any, understand that they are parts of a whole, and that any disease in any other part of that whole, must affect the whole, and consequently themselves. Were this thoroughly understood, even selfishness would lead men to act less selfishly."

"We should indeed have Heaven upon Earth if your pure theories could be brought into actual life."

"Heaven will be found no where else by man," was replied to this.

"What!" said the friend in surprise. "Do you mean to say that there is no Heaven for the good who bravely battle with evil in this life? Is all the reward of the righteous to be in this world?"

One of the pious company, at first introduced, came up at this moment, and hearing the last remark, comprehended to some extent, its meaning. He was one who hoped from pious acts of prayer, fastings, and attendance upon all the ordinances of the church, to get to Heaven at last. In the ordinary pursuits of life he was eager for gain, and men of the world dealt warily with him; they had reason, for he separated his religious from his business life.

"A most impious doctrine!" he exclaimed, with indignant warmth. "Heaven upon Earth! A man had better give all his passions the rein, and freely enjoy the world, if there is to be no hereafter. Pain, and sorrow, and self-denial, make a poor kind of Heaven; and these are all the Christian meets here. Far better to live while we do live, say I, if our Heaven is to be here."

"What makes Heaven, my friend?" calmly asked the old man.

"Happiness. Freedom from care, and pain and sorrow, and all the ills of this wretched life—to live in the presence of God and sing His praises forever—to make one of the blessed company who, with the four-and-twenty elders, forever bow before the throne of God and the Lamb—to have rest, and peace, and unspeakable felicity forever."

"How do you expect to get into Heaven? How do you expect to unlock the golden gates of the New Jerusalem?" pursued the old man.

"By faith," was the prompt reply. "Faith unlocks these gates."

"You asked me if I meant to say that there was no Heaven for the good who bravely battle with evil in this life? If all the reward of the righteous was to be in this world? God forbid! For then would I be, of all men, most miserable. What I said was, that Heaven would be *found* no where else but in this world, by man. Heaven must be entered into here, or it never can be entered into when men die."

"You speak in a strange language," said the individual who had joined them. "No one can understand what you mean. Certainly I do not."

"I should not think you did," quietly replied the old man. "But I will explain my meaning more fully—perhaps you will be able to comprehend something of what I say. Men talk a great deal about Heaven, but few understand what it means. All admit that in this life they must prepare for Heaven; but nearly all seem to think that this preparation consists in the *doing* of something as a means by which they will be entitled to enter Heaven after death, when there will be a sudden and wonderful change in all their feelings and perceptions."

"And is not that true?" asked one who had previously spoken.

"I do not believe that it is, in the commonly understood sense."

"And pray what do you believe?"

"I believe that all heavenly societies are engaged in doing good, and that heavenly delight is the delight which springs from a gratified love of benefiting others. And I also believe, that the beginning of Heaven with every one is on this Earth, and takes place when he first makes the effort to renounce self and seek, from a true desire to benefit them, the good of others. If this coming into Heaven, as I call it, does not take place here, it can never take place, for '*As the tree falls so it lies.*' Whatever is a man's internal quality when he dies, that it must remain forever. If he have been a lover of self, and sought only his own good, he will remain a lover of self in the next life. But, if he have put away self-love from his heart and shunned the evils to which it would prompt him, as sins, then he comes into Heaven while still upon Earth; and when he lays aside his mortal body, his heavenly life is continued. Thus you can see, that if a man do not find Heaven while in this world, he will not find it in the next. He must come into heavenly affections here, or he will never feel their warmth hereafter. Hundreds and thousands live on from day to day, thinking only of themselves, and caring only for themselves, who insanely cherish the hope that they will get into Heaven at last. Some of these are church-going people, and partakers of its ordinances; while others expect, some time before they die, to become pious, and thus, by a "saving faith," secure an entrance into Heaven. Their chances of finding Heaven, at last, are about equal. And if they should be permitted to come into a heavenly society, they would soon seek to escape from it. Where all sought the good of others, how could one who cared simply for his own good, remain and be happy? It could not be. If you wish to enter Heaven, my friend, you must bring heavenly life into your daily occupations."

"How can that be? Religion is too tender a plant for the world."

"Your error is a common one," replied the old man, "and arises from the fact that you do not know what religion is. Mere piety is not religion. There is a life of charity as well as a life of piety, and the latter without the former is like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

"All know that," was replied.

"All profess to know it, but all do not know what is meant by charity."

"It is love. That every Christian man admits."

"It is love for the neighbor in activity; not a mere idle emotion of the heart. Now, how can a man best promote the good of his neighbor? Love, you know, always seeks the good of its object; but in no way, it is clear, so well as by faithfully and dilligently performing the duties of his office, no matter what it may be. If a judge, let him administer justice with equity and from a conscientious principle ; if a physcian, a lawyer, a sailor, a merchant, or an artisan, let him with all diligence do the work that his hands find to do, not merely for gain, but because it is his duty to serve the public good in that calling by which he can most efficiently do it. If he act from this high motive, from this religious principle, all that he does will be well and faithfully done. No wrong to his neighbor can result from his act. True charity is not that feeling which prompts merely to the bestowment of worldly goods for the benefit of others—in fact, true charity has very little to do with alms-giving and public benefactions. It is not a mere "love for the brethren" only, as many religious denominations think, but it is a love that embraces all mankind, and regards good as its brother wherever and in whomsoever it is seen."

"That everyone admits.'

"Admission and practice, my friend, are too rarely found walking in the same path. But I am not at all sure that everyone admits that charity consists in a man's performing his daily uses in life with justice and judgment. By most minds, charity as well as religion are viewed as separate from the ordinary business of man ; while the truth is, there can be neither religion nor charity apart from a man's business life. If he be not charitable and religious here, he has neither charity nor religion; if he love not his neighbor—if he do not deal justly and conscientiously with his neighbor whom he hath seen, how can he love God, or act justly and conscientiously toward God, whom he hath not seen? How blind and foolish is more than half of mankind on this subject! You call R—— a very pious man, do you not?"

"I believe him to be so. We are members of the same church, and I see a good deal of him. He is superintendent of our Sabbath-school, and is active in all the various secular uses of the church."

"Do you know anything of his business life?"

"No."

"A man's reputation among business men gives the true impression of his character; for in business, the eagerness with which men seek their ends, causes them to forgot their disguises. Go and ask any man who knows R—— in business, and he will tell you that he is a sharper. That if you have any dealings with him you must keep your eyes open. I could point you to dozens of men who are as pious as he is on the Sabbath, who, in their ordinary life, are no better than swindlers. The Christian religion is disgraced by thousands of such, who are far worse than those who never saw the inside of a church."

"I am afraid that you, in the warmth of your indignation against false professors, are led into the extreme of setting aside all religion; or of making it to consist alone in mere honesty and integrity of character—your moral man is every thing; it is morality that opens heaven. Now, mere morality, mere good works, are worth nothing, and cannot bring a man into heaven."

"There is a life of piety and a life of charity, my friend, as I have before said," replied the old man, "and they cannot be separated. The life of charity regards man, and the life of piety, God. A man's prayers and fastings, and pious duties on the Sabbath, are nothing, if love to the neighbor, showing itself in a faithful performance of all life's varied uses that come within his sphere of action, is not operative through the week; vain hopes are all those which are built upon so crumbling a foundation as the mere life of piety. Morality as you call it, built upon man's pride, is of little use; but morality, which is based upon a sincere desire to do good, is worth a thousand prayers from the lips of a man who inwardly hates his neighbor."

"Then I understand you to mean that religious, or pious duties, are useless"—was remarked with a good deal of bitterness.

"I said," was mildly returned, "that the life of piety and the life of charity could not be separated. If a man truly loves his neighbor and seeks his good, he will come into heavenly states of mind, and will have his heart elevated, and from a consciousness that every good and perfect gift comes from God, worship him in a thankful spirit. His life of piety will make one with his life of charity. The Sabbath to him will be a day of true, not forced, spiritual life. He will rest from all natural labors, and gain strength, from rest, to re-commence those labors in a true spirit."

Much more was said that need not be repeated here. The closing remarks of the old man were full of truth. It will do any one good to remember them.

"Our life is two-fold. We have a natural life and a spiritual life," said he. "Our natural life delights in external things, and our spiritual life in what is eternal. The first regards the things of time and sense, the latter involves states and qualities of the soul. Heaven is a state of mutual love from a desire to benefit others, and whenever man's spiritual life corresponds with the life of heaven, so far as his spirit is concerned he is in heaven, notwithstanding his body still remains upon earth. His heavenly life begins here, and is perfected after death. If, therefore, a man does not enter heaven here, he cannot enter it when he dies. His state of probation is closed, and he goes to the place for which he is prepared. The means whereby man enters heaven here, are very simple. He need only shun as sin everything that would in any way injure his neighbor, either naturally or spiritually, and look above for the power to do this. This will effect an entrance through the straight gate. After that, the way will be plain before him, and he will walk in it with a daily increasing delight."

FRANK.

Dear one! How many thrilling chords awaken,
As on the ear sweet falls thy precious name:
Three moons have passed since thou wert from us taken—
Three moons, since Death unto our dwelling came;—
And still it seems as if, but briefly parted,
Thou would'st to us a moment hence return—
We listen for thy voice, till, weary-hearted,
Vain expectation doth to sorrow turn.

Fondly forgetful of our sad bereaving,
Again we think our loved one will appear;
Ah! How this addeth to our silent grieving—
The hours pass on, and still thou art not here.
All the old places, where we saw thee moving
From early morn until the day was o'er—
Thy step so light, thy look and tone so loving—
Are round us, but we see thy form no more.

The little chair, in which, from play reposing,
A few brief moments thy light form reclined;
The garments, thy pure body oft enclosing,
The hat that bound thy dark curls from the wind;

The shoes, half worn, and still the shape retaining
Impressed upon them by thy tiny feet;
All these, and more, that once were thine, remaining,
To speak of thee, our daily vision meet.

There's not a single room within our dwelling
That is not full of memories of thee;
No spot that some sweet story is not telling,
No object silent wheresoe'er we be.
The echo of thy voice floats round us ever,
And oft we turn to see if thou art near;
How sad the thought comes, thou hast pass'd forever—
In the old places will no more appear.

The first dear lamb from out our flock yet taken,
By the Good Shepherd, absent one, thou art—
Ere this, no touch bade sorrow's chords awaken
Low, mournful music in the weeping heart.
Can we not spare one for the fold in Heaven,
Without these tears that will not cease to flow?
Ah, loved too well!—such bonds may not be riven,
Painless and tearless—and we answer, no!

Yet, with this grief, what precious thoughts are blending
In our dark web of pain, a golden thread;
Faith's eye is clear, and sees bright forms attending
Thy steps, 'mid green and flowery places led;—

Bright forms of angels, pure and gentle hearted;
The best of all the shining ones above,
Who, little children from the earth departed
Receive and love with a celestial love.

Now thou art safely past all doubt and danger—
For this, how thankful 'mid our tears are we!—
To all earth's ills for evermore a stranger;
From earthly stain and evil passion free.
Even while to thee our souls are tearful clinging,
And sadly grieving that away thou art,
Pure wells of consolation, upward springing,
Pour their refreshing waters on the heart.

AUTUMN THOUGHTS.

The air, which had been chilled for a week by an early frost, was again genial as spring. A few lingering birds were fluttering about, sending up an occasional song or brief chirrup, while the mild south wind gently stirred the branches and coloured foliage of the trees.

"Our little world within—our sunny world, so bright with promise, has closed our eyes and ears to the beauty of a delicious autumn day," remarked Flora, looking out upon the pleasant scene. "It is not good to be so much absorbed in either the past or the future, as to lose what the present has to offer. Come, let us go out upon the lawn, and down through that pleasant little grove, to the fields beyond. There is much that we ought to feel on a day like this. Nature has no phases that does not reflect itself upon the heart, if the heart only turn towards it an undimmed surface. Spring, summer, autumn, winter, are full of instruction, not given didactically, but in pictures, which the eyes of all who can look upon and love nature may perceive and enjoy, at the same time that their deeper meanings are whispered in the spirit's ear."

Flora arose as she spoke, and drawing her arm within that of her friend Emily, the two maidens passed out into the open air. A slight crepitation reached the ear of the former as she stepped from the porch upon the grass, causing her to look down upon a withered leaf that her foot had crushed.

"Poor leaf! fallen to rise no more," she said, half sadly. "And yet," she added, in a more cheerful voice, "it is not the leaf that is dead, it is only the material form of a leaf that my foot has touched. The leaf—yes, the thousand leaves that were put forth by the tree from which this effigy has but just fallen, are still in the tree in perennial potency. They have only withdrawn from a decaying form. They will take to themselves new forms again when the warm springtime comes, as they have done through many past seasons, and gladden the eye of man with their beauty. No, no, the leaf is not dead—the grass is not withered—the flower has not faded: only what once manifested the leaf, the grass, the flower, have lost their life, their freshness, their loveliness. When the winter is past the leaf will take to itself new clothing, visible to our natural eyes; the grass will spring up, and the flowers will again gladden us with their presence. Will not the rose be the same, and the leaf the same? Here is a bush that every spring gives us its wealth of buds and blossoms. Its flowers are more fragrant than any in the garden. As the sultry heats of summer begin to burn around, the leaves of these blossoms lose their freshness, their colour grows dim, and at last they fall to the ground; but when spring returns, the same sweet flowers come again, and their colours and fragrance are as lovely and delightful as before. They are, in fact, the same flowers; I know them and love them as such."

"A sweet fancy, Flora, but only a fancy. How full you always are of such pleasant dreams. You look upon nature with the poet's eye, not with the eye of reason."

"The eye of the *true* poet sees nothing in nature that the eye of reason may not also perceive. It cannot, I think, require a dreamer of vague dreams to see in a dead leaf merely the form of a leaf, or in the new developments in the spring the same leaves or the same flowers that before clothed the branches or hung upon the stems. Are the elements from which the potent leaf in the tree forms a representation of itself visible to natural eyes, changed in each successive season? or is the form-producing principle itself changed? No! for if that were the fact, the leaf we saw this year would not be like the leaf we saw last year; the flower would be a flower with different quality and odour."

"I cannot look so deep as that, Flora. To me a dead flower that I have loved is dead indeed, and

I mourn for it as a friend lost to me forever. With Bryant, at this melancholy season, I can sigh—

'Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprang and stood
In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves; the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours

* * * * * *

The wind-flower, and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and orchis died amid the summer glow:
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sunflower by the brook in autumn's beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was given from upland, glade, and glen.

'And now, when comes the calm, mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill:
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.' "

"While I," returned Flora, "can feel and love the more cheerful spirit of Waterston. Let me repeat to you his sweet thoughts on 'Autumn.'

'Upon a leaf-strewn walk,
I wander on amid the sparkling dews;
Where autumn hangs, upon her frost-gemm'd stalk,
Her gold and purple hues:

Where the tall fox-gloves shake
Their loose bells to the wind, and each sweet flower
Bows down its perfumed blossoms to partake
The influence of the hour:

Where the cloud-shadows pass
With noiseless speed by lovely lake and rill,
Chasing each other o'er the low, crisp'd grass,
And up the distant hill;

Where the clear stream steals on
Upon its silent path, as it were sad
To find each downward-gazing flower had gone,
That made it once so glad.

I number it in days
Since last I roam'd through this secluded dell,
Seeking a shelter from the summer rays,
Where flowers and wild-birds dwell.

While gemm'd with dewdrops bright,
Green leaves and silken buds are dancing there,
I moved my lips in murmurs of delight,
"And bless'd them unawares."

How changed each sylvan scene!
Where is the warbling bird? the sun's clear ray
The waving brier-rose? the foliage green,
That canopied my way?

Where is the balmy breeze
That fann'd so late my brow? the sweet southwest,
That, whispering music to the listening trees,
My raptured spirit bless'd?

Where are the notes of spring?
Yet the brown bee still hums his quiet tune,
And the low shiver of the insect's wing
Disturbs the hush of noon.

The thin, transparent leaves,
Like flakes of amber, quiver in the light
While autumn round her silver fretwork weaves
In glittering hoarfrost white.

Oh, autumn, thou art bless'd!
My bosom heaves with breathless rapture here:
I love thee well, season of mournful rest!
Sweet Sabbath of the year!'

"If the poet had only said 'cheerful rest' instead of 'mournful rest,' he would have spoken a higher truth. Autumn is the seasons' rest after the mission of spring and summer is accomplished; the time when, having finished her labour of love in giving bountifully of her fruits to man and those below him in the scale of animate creation, the earth rests peacefully from her toil. The leaves and flowers have not perished; they live still in her bosom, as green, as beautiful, as fragrant as ever, and after her Sabbath of rest has passed she will give them to us again. Is not there in all this, Emily, a moral of sweet import? Our days will pass on, and we shall arrive at the autumn of life, the season of rest, the Sabbath of our year. Shall it be a cheerful or a mournful rest? When our leaves begin to fade and drop away, one by one, and our branches, stripped of their beautiful foliage, cut sharply the cold, clear sky, shall we feel that the leaves and blossoms are still fresh and green in our bosoms? We may, Emily! We shall live in vain if such be not our experience—if such an autumn rest do not await us—if, in the renewed life we live beyond this region, our leaves do not again put forth with a fresher greenness."

By this time the young friends had passed the grove of tall trees to which Flora had alluded at first, and were in a little island of green, through which went rippling over white pebbles a narrow brook, that farther on widened into a lake, around which, in the summer days, the wild flowers and tall grass had gathered. Now the former had all departed, and the latter bent down until it lay drooping upon the bosom of the water, over which floated many faded leaves. Near this lake was a rustic seat, and here the maidens rested themselves, hand clasped in hand, and hearts impressed with the scene around them. Nature was mirroring herself in their bosoms; but to each the spectrum was different. To one it was a well-defined image, to the other dim and distorted; to one it was cheerful, to the other sad. One could look at nature with the eye of poetic reason; to the other, its hidden meanings were not revealed.

"See, Flora," said Emily, pointing to the little lake, and speaking in a subdued and saddened voice, "how many leaves are floating there! Ah! how many hopes will thus be stripped from us, and fall as those withered leaves have fallen, forever lifeless?"

"Yes, Emily, if our hopes regard nothing more intrinsic than leaves—the graceful, the beautiful, the excellent, the useful in exterior—they will fade and fall when the autumn-time comes, and then shall we be sad indeed; but if, like the tree, our leaves do not exist for themselves alone, but to aid the interior life of our souls, to assist the work of fruit-bearing, we shall not mourn when they are stricken from our branches. Their work will be all done. The fruit will have been gathered, and garnered, and then a sweet Sabbath of rest will be our portion. The tree has produced its fruit, and now is about to rest from its labours. It needs no longer the leaves that before reacted in externals upon the active life within, and assisted in the development, growth, and maturity of fruit. It therefore casts them aside. Let us be glad that it has performed its true use. Let us think of the fruit, and not of the leaves; and, still farther, let us see in this rest the regathering of its productive energies, that shall again clothe its branches with foliage, and load them with generous fruit."

THE POOR MAN.

"You don't look well, Mr. Preston; I'm afraid you stick too close to your shop," said a friend to Mr. Archibald Preston, a thriving manufacturer, whose well conducted and growing business yielded him from four to five thousand dollars yearly.

"I'm not very well," replied Mr. Preston. "The fact is, as you say, I am confined too closely to business. I need more recreation than I get."

"Why don't you go off, then, and take a good holiday? A week at the sea shore, or a trip over the mountains would add a year to your life."

"Very likely. But such luxuries are not for me. I am too poor for these indulgences."

"Too poor! You, Mr. Preston?"

"Yes, indeed, I'm too poor. There is no better established fact than this. It would delight me to do as you suggest. Last year I settled, as a thing certain, a trip to Niagara this summer. But I expected a much easier money market than there has been since mid-winter. No, I can't leave home on any pleasure trip. I'm too poor for that."

"Poor man!" said the friend to himself, as he walked away; "I wonder if he will ever feel able to take any enjoyment in life?"

Shortly after, a gentleman called upon Mr. Preston, and asked if he would not take two or three dollars' worth of tickets for a concert, got up for the benefit of a sick musician and his destitute family.

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure," he replied; "but I am too poor. We must be just, you know, before we are generous. It wouldn't be right for me to spend three or four dollars for concert tickets, and then let my notes be protested."

"No; certainly not. But there is no danger of that."

"I don't know; I ought to be the best judge. Every one knows where the shoe pinches. It's just as I tell you. I'm too poor for such luxuries."

"Don't call it a luxury, but a charity," Mr. Preston."

"But is not charity a luxury? Can anything produce more real pleasure than the act of relieving the distress of our fellow creatures? If I were only able, no man would take more delight in doing good. The time will come, I trust, when my hand will be as open as my heart. At present, as I have said, I must content myself with being just. I am too poor to be generous."

Now, all this was not sheer hypocrisy. Mr.

Preston did think, that if he were only in good circumstances, he would be exceedingly generous; that he would scatter benefits around him with a liberal hand. But until he became better off in the world, he deemed it but right to exercise prudence in all things. And he was correct in the principle, though scarcely so in the rigid way he applied it to his own case.

A beggar came into Mr. Preston's little office or counting-room, soon after the friend to the sick musician had retired, and asked for a penny.

"We've nothing to give away," said he, waving his hand for the mendicant to withdraw. "We're all too poor here."

"Only a penny, sir," importuned the beggar; "only a single penny."

"Didn't I tell you, that we had nothing to give away," repeated Mr. Preston, sternly. Then he muttered to himself, as he turned to his desk,

"I'm too poor to scatter money in the street; or to fill the hand of every one who asks for charity."

And Mr. Preston really did feel poor; far poorer than his clerk, to whom he paid seven hundred dollars a year; and who, on that sum, maintained a wife and two children, and partook, at the same time, of such amusements and recreations within his means, as he deemed essential to mental and bodily health. He could also occasionally indulge in the luxury of benevolence, a thing felt by his employer to be almost entirely beyond his ability.

At home this poor feeling of Mr. Preston, manifested itself in various forms, all, in some way or other, abridging the comforts his family were entitled by virtue of his real ability to enjoy.

Mr. Preston started in life with the purpose of acquiring property. Never since his earliest recollection, had he felt otherwise than poor; and consequently, unable to enjoy the good things of life with which so many around him were blessed. The means possessed in the present, were never adequate to bring within his grasp such things as he desired; and, therefore, he felt always too poor to indulge in the blessings appropriate to his true external condition. When his income was a thousand dollars a year, he restricted himself and family to an expenditure of five hundred; and when it was three thousand, the limit of expense was one thousand. Now, he was reaping an annual profit of at least five thousand dollars, and was actually worth thirty thousand dollars; and yet he felt poorer than he did five years before; and was troubled in his mind at the thought of being under the ruinous expense of fifteen hundred dollars a year for the support of his family.

"If I were a rich man," was, next to, "I'm too poor for that," his commonest form of expression. And he was never called upon to expend a dollar, except in the way of business, without a feeling of reluctance at parting with the money, amounting almost to pain. Wealth was, in his eyes, the greatest good, and its possession the means of bringing the highest earthly happiness. Yet, as far as his experience went, it contradicted this idea entirely; for the better off in the world he became, the more was he inwardly dissatisfied, and the more eagerly did he grasp for still larger possessions. His error was like that of far too many others. He imagined that wealth in itself would bring a state of mental tranquillity—a peace of mind that nothing could disturb. And he believed also, that after he had become rich, he would use his riches for the procurement of all the good things for himself and family that earth had to offer. While he was poor, self-denial was felt to be a virtue; when he became rich, he meant to be liberal to himself and others.

And so the world went on with Mr. Archibald Preston. Yearly he added house to house, and dollar to dollar. But he was still in feeling, a poor man. It really hurt him to part with a shilling; and almost every luxury his family enjoyed was wrung from him by his pride, or yielded to an importunity that he had not the moral power to withstand. His health was suffering through prolonged application to business, and he felt the necessity for relaxation. If he could have done so at the time a friend suggested, as has been seen, to visit the sea-shore, he would have gone and taken cheap boarding in some private family for a week or two. But that economical way of doing the thing was out of the question; for his wife had been urging him, year after year, to take her to Cape May, Saratoga, or some other summer resort; and if he went for his heath, she must, of course, go along. And this would make the trip far more expensive than he felt able to afford. So he denied himself on this ground. When he was able, even in his own estimation, to make his wife the companion in the long-thought-of and desired summer recreation, another drawback to the enjoyment was at hand. Three daughters had come so near to the estate of womanhood, that the leaving them at home, as indifferent parties to such an arrangement, was out of the question. And to take them along would make the expense entirely too great. Their school bills, music bills, and bills for various private lessons in the languages, etc., were really appalling to the father, and kept him, all the time, with a poor feeling about his heart. To add to the annual cost of living, already alarmingly great, by a fashionable trip to the springs or the sea-shore, was not to be thought of for a moment.

"But," urged Mrs. Preston, who was more importunate than usual, "it is absolutely necessary for you to take some relaxation from business. And

I am sure we can afford the expense far better than the Melvilles, who go to Saratoga, Newport, or somewhere else every season."

"As for that," replied the husband, "I am of opinion that the Melvilles had much better stay at home. To my certain knowledge, Melville is always short for money; and rarely succeeds in getting a note out of bank without borrowing from some one. I believe I am worth two dollars to his one, if the truth were known, but I can't afford the extravagances in which he indulges."

"A couple of hundred dollars once in your lifetime," said Mrs. Preston, in reply to this argument "I am sure, can't hurt you. For more than twenty years you have been tugging at the oar of business, without so much as a week's relaxation; and I think it is a pity if you can't take a little enjoyment now. What's the use of money, if it does not enlarge our comforts?"

"Two hundred dollars, indeed! If it were not going to cost any more than this I would not say a word; though I am not so clear that it would be right to throw even that sum away. But five hundred is not going to cover the cost. Why, you and the girls would spend at least two hundred in new clothes before thinking yourselves in any kind of decent trim to appear at a fashionable watering place. I know exactly how it will be. I've thought it over and over again, and can come within a dollar of the cost."

"Suppose it were to cost a thousand dollars," said Mrs. Preston. "What of that? It is only once a year; and it's a pity we can't enjoy, to some small extent, the means in our hands. I'd rather be poor than to suffer the tantalization of our present circumstances."

"Poor! Rich! Can't I make you comprehend, Ellen, that we are not rich? If I were rolling in wealth, it would be another thing. But I am not. Every cent I can scrape together I need in my business; and, under these circumstances, to throw away five hundred or a thousand in two or three weeks for mere pleasure would be a folly that I am not insane enough to commit. It would be a pleasant thing indeed, to come home from Newport, after a month's dissipation, and have my paper lie over immediately after."

"Oh, there's no danger of that!" said Mrs. Preston, impatiently.

"Beg your pardon, madam! there is danger. No man who wastes his money can expect to prosper. Suppose we had gone on as extravagantly as the Fultons—what then? Why, we should have been as poor as they are. Prudence and industry have made me prosperous to a certain extent; and I cannot think of marring all by departing at the present time from the good rule wisely adopted in the beginning."

It was no use for Mrs. Preston to argue the case with her husband. He held the purse-strings, and that, too, with no slight grasp. If he did not feel able to afford the expense, no matter how craved the indulgence, it had to be given up. So the trip to Newport or Saratoga was abandoned for that season ; though under a promise, which was made in order to get the subject postponed, of a compliance with the wife's wishes when the next summer came round.

At the time this plea of being too poor to bear the expenses was so successfully urged, Mr. Preston was worth, at least, a hundred thousand dollars, and was conducting business on a very extensive scale. But all his means were locked up in his business, or otherwise invested, and he kept himself poor by pushing his enterprise to the fullest extent. Every hundred dollar check, drawn for family expenses, was filled up with a sigh ; for that much was lost, irrevocably. Money expended in business, like seed sown in the ground, produced more money ; but money spent for eating, drinking, and other things necessary to the support of life, was felt to be like so much thrown upon the sea. As Mr. Preston grew older and more prosperous, this false estimate of money became more and more confirmed, and the feeling arising therefrom, stronger and stronger. He never felt otherwise than poor ; for he never saw clearly how he could spare money from his business or investments, when he could have used profitably five times as much as he really possessed.

When the daughters of Mr. Preston arrived at woman's age, he found an influence brought to bear upon him that he could not resist; and money, much as the extravagance pained him, was spent with a freedom certainly at variance with his previous habits. Spite of all resistance on his part, the trip to Saratoga was made in the summer succeeding that in which he admitted that he was able to take his wife but not his daughters; and, agreeably to his estimate of expense, the levy upon his purse for that extra piece of 'folly,' as he did not fail to call it, was exactly one thousand dollars; and this in despite of all his disputes with porters, cabmen, boot-blacks, waiters and hotel-keepers, the whole *posse* of whom he declared were in combination to rob travelers.

The wife and daughters of Mr. Preston having gained a decided advantage to themselves, were not at all disposed to relinquish it. The trip to the Springs made them three or four new city acquaintances, with whom visits were exchanged soon after their return home. These new acquaintances happened to be living in a style which rather shamed the ladies of Mr. Preston's family, and opened their eyes a little in regard to what was due to their social position. A larger house, and newer and more elegant furniture were proposed, and, of course, opposed. But Mr. Preston's opposition was not of long continuance. The odds were entirely against him. He tried to get the matter put off for a year or two; to a time when he hoped to feel more able to afford the expense; but no such proposition would be listened to. As for the plea of being "too poor to afford an extravagant style of living," it was not in the least regarded, for it was not believed.

So very rapid was Mr. Preston's accumulation of wealth, that could he have kept his annual expenditure within the limit it had obtained previous to this new innovation, he would have begun to feel a little comfortable—in fact, to regard himself as being in quite easy circumstances. But the purchase of a house at a cost of twenty thousand dollars, with the additional item added thereto of five thousand dollars for fashionable furniture, caused him to feel so poor as to become actually unhappy; the more especially, as shortly after the possession of his elegant residence, the new year came round, and with it the accustomed annual investigation into business affairs. Unexpectedly, the result of this investigation was a discovery that, instead of a clear yearly profit of ten or twelve thousand dollars, not a single cent had really been made. Two or three pretty serious losses, through failures, added to a sudden depression of prices, while a large stock of manufactured goods were on hand, had produced this result. These failures and this depression in prices were events of very recent occurrence, and their real effect upon the year's business was just becoming apparent.

Poor Mr. Preston! He had less enjoyment now than ever in the good things of life with which God had blessed him. His property was nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and his business a large and profitable one. Yet so poor did he feel after the result of that one unfortunate year became known to him, that for the trouble of mind he scarcely slept at night, or eat through the day. Not a block away from where he lived was a man whose income was fixed at twelve hundred dollars. He, also, had grown-up daughters, and younger children were still to be raised and educated. Yet he was a rich man compared with Mr. Preston; for he rarely had a poor feeling, and enjoyed to the full extent the natural blessings his income enabled him to procure. Sometimes, as he passed the handsome residence of the man rich in this world's goods, he thought how pleasant it must be to have money to spend for all that the heart desired, and to be removed from the necessity of nice calculation in expenditure and self-denial in even moderate desires. But such thoughts were soon dismissed, and caused but a small weight of discontent to rest upon his feelings. He had a hopeful and confident spirit; and was, therefore, rich in comparison with his neighbor.

The next year's business did not turn out much better for Mr. Preston. There had arisen a great competition in the principal article he manufactured, prices had gradually been falling, and a large stock accumulating. In the early part of the year he stopped his works altogether, and during the remaining portion did but very little. Utterly discouraged at the prospect before him in the beginning of the next year, and fearful lest a continuance in business would result in some disaster, he sold out his establishment at a sacrifice of about twenty thousand dollars on the price at which he valued it, and retired from the business world, feeling really poorer than when he started in life with only a few hundred dollars that he could call his own.

The fact of his retiring from business gave very naturally the impression that he had accumulated a handsome fortune and was determined to enjoy it. A man with this reputation is not always left undisturbed in the possession of what he has accumulated. Not long after he had withdrawn himself from the active world to brood over his disappointments, and to ponder on the smallness of his fortune, and the danger of its being swept from his grasp by some unforseen event, against the occurrence of which no foresight of his could guard, he was called upon by a leading member of the church he regularly attended every Sabbath, for a contribution to its funds for some special purpose. The subscription was unfolded, and, to his dismay, Mr. Preston saw that men really not half so well off in the world as he, had written down their hundreds. A ten dollar subscription was in his mind, as the utmost he felt justified in giving; but his pride would not let him write down "Archibald Preston, $10," among names opposite to which stood three, four, and five hundred dollars. He considered awhile to see if there was no way of escape with credit to himself; but none presenting itself, he resolved to gain time by saying—

"Call to-morrow about this hour, and I will be prepared to say what I will give."

To-morrow, at that hour, not having made up his mind definitely, he managed to be out of the way. By this means, he escaped for a week; but the evil day could not be put off entirely. The man with the subscription-paper found him out again, when with a sigh, he wrote—"Archibald Preston, $300."

The poor man felt at least twenty thousand dollars poorer after this act. He did not hear ten words of the sermon, on the next Sabbath, for thinking of the ruinous subscription he had been forced to make; and half made up his mind, before the services were concluded, to give up his pew and attend some free church were the gospel was dispensed as it ought to be, without money and without price. Such an arrangement, however, he knew better than to propose; for there was a power behind the throne of his will greater than the throne itself. His family knew precisely his ability, and did not let their demands upon his purse fall very far below it.

The annual income of Mr. Preston, on retiring from business, and investing all his money in real estate and government scrip, was $8,000. The expense at which he was living was about $6,000. For two or three years this went on, and finding that he was better off by about two thousand dollars, at the end of each year, he began to feel as if he were in tolerable easy circumstances, when a large fire broke out in a part of the city where he owned five warehouses. These, with a large amount of other property, were consumed. A mistake of just one day in the date of the policy of insurance, threw him into a loss of $25,000 dollars. This property had paid him seven per cent. above taxes and all other expenses, and the loss in his annual income was, in consequence, over $1,700.

Mr. Preston was now poor indeed. The rest of his property paid him but little over 6,000, and he was living at a cost equal to that sum. An immediate change was insisted upon and carried; the poor man had arguments to urge that were made unanswerable. Reform once begun, was extended far beyond the point to which those who yielded at first imagined it would go. "It's no use to talk—I can't afford it!" was an all powerful argument, uttered as it was with unaccustomed determination of manner. The elegant house was rented for $2,000, and the family came down so far in their style of living as to take up their abode in one for which Mr. Preston had been receiving $800.

By these changes Mr. Preston actually reduced his expenses to $2,000 below his income. But he has never got over his loss of $25,000; and feels so poor that he refuses all applications of a charitable nature, denies himself and family at a hundred different points, to the abridgment of his own and their real comfort, and makes both himself and them wretched.

Poor man! Had he the wealth of Crœsus it would be all the same. To one like him, money never comes with a blessing, for his mind estimates it falsely, and is incapable of finding in its possession any of the real enjoyments that competency is designed to bring.

TOO BUSY.

A MOTHER'S CONFESSION.

MOTHER! mother!" cried my little Willy, coming in upon me, as I set busily at work, "I've lost my arrow in the grass and can't find it."

He was just ready to burst into tears from grief at his mishap. "I'm sorry, dear," I said calmly, as I went on with my work.

"Won't you go and find it for me, mother?" he asked with a quivering lip, as he laid hold of my arm.

"I'm too busy, dear," I replied, gently shaking him off. "Go and tell Jane to find it for you."

"Jane can't find it," said the little fellow, in a choking voice.

"Tell her to go and look again.'

"She has looked all over, and can't find it. Won't you come mother, and find it for me?"

The tears were now rolling over his face. But I was too busy to attend to Willy. I was embroidering the edge of a little linen sack that I was making for him, and that, for the moment, seemed of more importance than the happiness of my child.

"No—no," I replied. "I'm to busy to go down stairs. You must take better care of your arrows. Go and ask Ellen to find it for you.'"

"Ellen says she won't look for it." Willy was now crying outright.

"There! there! don't be so foolish as to cry at the loss of such a little thing as an arrow," said I, in a reproving voice. "I'm ashamed of you!"

"Won't you go and find it for me, mother?" he urged, still crying.

"No indeed, Willy. I'm too busy now. Go and look for it again yourself."

"But I can't find it. I have looked."

"Then go and look again," said I, firmly.

Willy went crying down stairs, and I heard him crying about the yard for some ten minutes, until my patience began to give out.

"Such a to-do about an arrow! I wish I'd never bought him the bow-arrow!" said I, moving uneasily in my chair.

"Ellen, won't you make me another arrow? Here is a stick," I heard him ask of the cook, in a pleading voice. But Ellen replied rudely—

"No indeed, I shall not! I've got something else to do besides making arrows."

The child's crying was renewed. I felt vexed at Ellen. "She might have made him the arrow," I said. "If I wasn't so busy I would go down and make him one myself. But I must get this sack done."

And I sewed away more rapidly than before. The crying went on. Willy had lost his arrow, and his heart was almost broken. Unfortunately, I was not in a mood to sympathise with him. An arrow, to me, was a very little thing, and it worried me to hear him crying as if his heart would break over a loss so trifling as that of an arrow.

"Willy?" I at length said, calling out of the window, "you must stop that crying."

"I can't find my arrow, and nobody will make me another," replied the little fellow.

"That's nothing to make such disturbance about!" I said. "Go and find something else to play with."

"I want my arrow. Won't you come and find it for me, mother?"

"No, not now. I'm too busy."

The crying went on again as loudly as before, and I soon lost all my patience. Laying aside my work, I went to the head of the stairway and called down—

"Come, now, Sir! There's been enough of this crying, and you must stop it."

"I can't find my arrow," returned Willy.

"Well, suppose you can't; will crying bring it? You should take better care of your things. Little boys must look the way they shoot."

"I did look, but I can't find it."

"Go and look again, then."

"I have looked, and it ain't there."

And then the crying went on again. To Willy the loss of his arrow was a real grief, and he was too young to have fortitude to bear his trouble patiently. But I was not in a state of mind to feel with him.

"Stop that crying instantly," said I, as the worrying sound came again upon my ears. "I won't have such a noise in the house."

But my words had no effect: they did not produce the arrow. Willy cried on.

Unable longer to endure the sound, and also thinking it wrong to let him indulge the habit of crying, I laid my work aside, and going down stairs, took hold of him resolutely, saying as I did so—

"Now, stop this instantly!"

The child looked up at me with a most distressed countenance, while the tears covered his face.

"I can't find my arrow," said he with quivering lip.

"I'm sorry—but crying won't find it. Come up stairs with me." Willy ascended to my room.

"Now don't let me hear one word more of this. The next time you get an arrow take better care of it."

There was no sympathy in my tones; for I felt none. I did not think of his loss, but of the evil and annoyance of crying. The little fellow stifled his grief, or rather the utterance of it, as best he could, and throwing himself at full length upon the floor, sighed and sobbed for some ten minutes. A sigh, longer and more fluttering than usual, aroused my attention, and I then became aware that he had fallen asleep.

How instantly do our feelings change toward a child when we find that it is asleep. If we have been angry or offended, we are so no longer. Tenderness comes in the place of sterner emotions. I laid aside my work, and taking Willy in my arms, lifted him from the floor, and laid him upon my bed. Another long, fluttering sigh, agitated his bosom as his head touched the pillow. How reprovingly came the sound upon my ears! How sadly did it echo and re-echo in my heart!

"Poor child!" I murmured. "To him the loss of an arrow was a great thing. It has disturbed him to the very centre of his little being. I wish, now, that I had put by my work for a few minutes until I could have found his arrow, or made him a new one. I would have lost no more time in doing so than I have already lost. And, after all, what is a little time taken from my work to the happiness of my child? Ah me! I wish I could learn to think right at the right time. Dear little fellow! He was so happy with his bow and arrow. But all was destroyed by the untimely loss, which I could have restored in a few moments. Unfeeling—unnatural mother! Is this the way you show your love for your child?"

I stood for nearly five minutes over my sleeping boy. When I turned away, I did not resume my sewing, for I had no heart to work upon the little garment. I went down into the yard, and the first object that met my eye was the lost arrow, partly concealed behind a rose-bush, where it had fallen.

"So easily found!" said I. "How much would a minute given at the right time have saved! Ah me! We learn too late, and repent when repentance is of little avail."

It was an hour before the deep sleep into which my Willy had fallen, was broken. I had, in the meantime, resumed my sewing, after having lost fully half an hour in consequence of being unwilling to lose a few minutes for the sake of attending to my child, and relieving him of the trouble that had come upon him. The first notice I received of his being awake, was his gratified exclamation at finding his lost arrow beside him. All his past grief was forgotten. In a few minutes he was down in the yard, shooting his arrow again, and as happy as before. No trace of his recent grief remained.

But I could not forget it. With me the circumstance was not as the morning cloud and the early dew. The sunshine that came afterward did not dissipate instantly the one, nor drink up the other. I was sober for many hours afterwards; for the consciousness of having done wrong, as well as of having been the occasion of grief to my child, lay with a heavy pressure upon my feelings.

THE END.